

WEST COAST UNIVERSITY

CREDIT HOURS

Federal regulations define a credit hour as 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 the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time.
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.

To comply with the federal definition, courses offered at West Coast University have an expectation of two hours of work outside of class for each hour of lecture, and one hour of work outside of class for each hour of lab work.

West Coast University measures its academic programs in semester credit hours, which are defined as follows:

1. For lecture classes, one semester credit is equal to 15 clock hours of instruction.
2. For laboratory classes, one semester credit is equal to 30 clock hours of instruction.
3. For Supervised Clinical/Practicum classes, one semester credit is equal to 45 clock hours. Labs in the Nursing are considered clinical for credit hour calculations.
4. For externships/internships, one semester credit is equal to 65 clock hours. In such scenarios, a student works in an agency or other professional setting under the supervision of a designated and University-approved practicing professional.

Since in the above definitions, credits are translated to "clock hours," West Coast University defines a "clock hour" as a minimum of 50 minutes in which lectures, demonstrations, and similar class and related student learning activities are conducted.

DEFINITION OF A CREDIT HOUR IN AN ONLINE CLASS

Calculation of credit hours in an online or blended format course is based on the consideration of the following activities:

1. The time spent in live instruction. Live instruction may be
 - a. synchronous or instructor-led online time, or
 - b. on-ground learning in the classroom
2. The number of screens viewed in the course of online instruction. The average time spent on a “screen” is generally calculated as being between 3-5 minutes per screen.
3. The run-time for required media asset assignments calculated on a 1:1 ratio to seat time. Run time may be factored to account for expected multiple viewings of the asset for review and re-enforcement of the material. Assets may include:
 - a. self-playing videos or animation, or
 - b. audio podcasts and recordings
4. Links to external learning assets – calculated as an average of the time required to consume content such as by reading an article
 - a. watching a self-paced instructional video
 - b. playing an instructional game
 - c. or completing a simulation
5. Assignments – The instructor expectation of time spent in online instructional assignments and activities such as:
 - a. postings to group discussion sites/bulletin boards
 - b. online group project work
 - c. use of class social media sites for group discussion/participation
 - d. student-teacher interaction