



Office of
Analytics & Planning
JACKSONVILLE UNIVERSITY



Office of the Registrar
JACKSONVILLE UNIVERSITY

Credit Hour Policy

This policy documents Jacksonville University's compliance with regional and national accrediting guidelines. The University's policy aligns with both SACSCOC (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges) [Standard 10.7](#) and subsequent [policy](#), along with federal regulations defining credit hours as established in [Section 600.2](#), which defines a credit hour as:

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.*

DEFINITION

In accordance with federal government guidelines, Jacksonville University defines one credit hour as the amount of student time investment that reasonably approximates one hour of classroom (or direct faculty instruction) and a minimum of two hours out-of-class student work for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester—or the equivalent amount of that work as established by JU, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

In accordance with commonly accepted practices in higher education, JU operates on a 50-minute hour for this definition. Fifty clock minutes per week per credit hour for approximately 15 weeks provides approximately 750 minutes of direct faculty instruction time per credit hour based on the Carnegie Unit. This basic measure may be adjusted proportionately to reflect modified academic calendars and formats of study.

Credit hours are granted for various types of instruction as follows:

1. Lecture, discussion, or seminar: one contact hour constitutes one credit hour (1:1)
2. Self-Contained laboratory period (under direct supervision of faculty, including music ensembles and studio classes): 3 contact hours constitutes one credit hour (3:1)
3. Non-Self-Contained Laboratory Session (requires outside preparation by student, including internships and practica): 2 contact hours constitutes one credit hour (2:1)
4. Hybrid, online, and other courses of less than a full semester's duration should be commensurate with the above guidelines and will generally follow the 1:1 formula. In order to compensate for the loss of contact hours, courses may either hold longer class times than the regular academic schedule or add a component of coursework to equalize the workload

with a traditional semester course. Courses taught in a non- traditional medium or with fewer than standard classroom hours must achieve the same learning outcomes as a traditional class meeting for a standard 15-week semester.

Other proposed credit hour/contact hour combinations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis using the above guidelines, and a decision made by the faculty of the department of division. It is the responsibility of the Curriculum Committee to ensure that new courses meet the credit policy expectations in the approval process.

DOCUMENTING CREDIT HOURS

All student work must be able to be documented, including a reasonable approximation of time required for a student to complete course assignments.

Activity	Assignments	Undergraduate Estimated Approximation	Graduate Estimated Expectation Approximation
Direct Family Instruction	Reading discussion forums and making research-based responses	2 hours per forum	3 hours per forum
	Reading discussion forums and making responses	1 hour per forum	1.5 hours per forum
	Case studies	1 hour per page	1.5 hours per page
	Research papers	3 hours per page	3-4 hours per page
	Quizzes and exams	Length of quiz/exam	Length of quiz/exam
	Listening to/reading course lectures	25 pages per hour	20 pages per hour
	Reading additional online documents	25 pages per hour	20 pages per hour
Preparation (out-of-class student work)	Audio and video	Length of material	Length of material
	Required textbooks, ordinary reading level	30 pages per hour	25 pages per hour
	Required textbooks, difficult reading level	25 pages per hour	20 pages per hour
	Study of materials	Length and complexity	Length and complexity

- The average adult reading rate is 250 words per minute with 70% comprehension. [Smith, Brenda D. "Breaking Through: College Reading" 7th Ed. Longman, 2004]
- Reading speed can be divided into three categories: reading for learning (100-200 wpm); reading for comprehension (200-400 wpm); and skimming (400-700 wpm). With an average of 400 words per page, at 200 words per minute, a student should read around 30 pages per hour (200 words per minute x 60 = 12,000 words per hour divided by 400 = 30 pages per hour). Therefore, we are using 25-30 pages per hour.
- Audiobooks are recommended to be 150-160 words per minute or 22 pages per hour.
- Reading on a monitor is estimated to be 180-200 wpm or 27 pages per hour.
- Slide presentations can be calculated at 100 wpm or 15 slides per hour.
- Discussion forum times are based on an analysis of average time spent in online graduate courses [Brown, A. H., & Green, T. (2009). Time students spend reading threaded discussions in online graduate courses requiring asynchronous participation. The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 10(6), 51-64.]