

Credit Hour Policy

A contact hour is described as interaction between faculty and students via lecture, discussion, research, project/problem, debate, etc. For lecture class formats, one credit requires a minimum of 12.5 faculty contact hours (750 minutes) and a minimum of 30 hours of out-of-class student work over the course of the 15 week semester. A three-credit course is thus equal to a minimum of 37.5 faculty contact hours (2,250 minutes) with the expectation of 90 hours of student out-of-class work time. Summarized below are the credits awarded to students enrolled in a lecture course format based upon the faculty contact hours and expected student work hours.

Credits awarded for Lecture/Seminar based courses taught in a 15 week semester:

	Faculty direct instruction time (hours)	Faculty direct instruction time (minutes)	Student out-of-class work time (hours)
1 credit	12.5	750	30
2 credits	25.0	1500	60
3 credits	37.5	2250	90
4 credits	50.0	3000	120

In addition, the following define standard practices for awarding credits for other types of class formats:

Online or hybrid courses

Online and/or hybrid courses provide direct instruction time equivalent to 12.5 hours per credit awarded. Students are expected to engage in a minimum of 30 hours of additional work for every credit awarded. (Hybrid method may be listed as Reduced Seat Time).

Weekend, summer, or accelerated courses

Courses offered at an accelerated pace during the semester or during the summer must meet the same learning outcomes as an identical course offered during the 15 week semester at the standard pace. Faculty direct instruction time is a minimum of 12.5 hours per credit awarded.

Laboratory Courses

Science and clinical labs with 2 contact hours/week over the 15 week semester are awarded 1 credit. Labs with 3 contact hours/week over the 15 week semester are awarded 1 to 1.5 credits. Labs with 4 or more hours/week over the 15 week semester are awarded 2 credits.

Lab-based courses offered through a combination of class and laboratory meeting observe the credit hour standards using the appropriate combination of lecture and lab guidelines (e.g. a 4-credit lecture/lab with 2.5 hours of lecture per week would have a 2-3 hour weekly lab).

Studio Courses: Art, Design, Music, and Dance

Studio art courses: 3 credits are awarded for NASAD accredited studio art courses (with prefixes such as AEM, ART, GMD, and ISD) that have 5 contact hours per week for 15 weeks. Non accredited studio art courses (AFA prefix) have 4.3 contact hours per week for 15 weeks and are awarded 3 credits.

- Studio music courses (including Applied Voice, applied instrument, and Chorus): for every 1.5 credits awarded, students receive a minimum of 50 minutes of direct instruction/week for 10 weeks and are expected to practice for a minimum of 1 hour each day.
- Studio dance courses: 3 credits are awarded for studio dance courses that have a minimum of 2.5 hours of direct instruction per week for 15 weeks. Students have additional course requirements and assignments that require a minimum of 2 hours of additional work for every credit earned.

Undergraduate or Graduate Internship, Practicum, Student Teaching, Clinical Placement

The specific number of required hours per credit awarded varies depending on the discipline and/or the requirements set by the program's accrediting body. All require a minimum of 40 supervised clock hours per 1 credit awarded.

Thesis/Dissertation, Honors Project

Courses in which students are working on independent projects such as a thesis/dissertation or honors project conform to the standard minimum of 3 hours of student work per credit hour, per week, throughout the course of the semester, or the equivalent amount of work distributed over a different period of time.

Independent Study

Courses offered through independent study are awarded a varying number of credits depending on the agreement between the student and faculty member. The student meets periodically with the professor at a schedule or frequency agreed upon at the start of the course. Assignments and evaluation methods are communicated to the student in the course approval form and at the start of the course. Students are expected to engage in a minimum of 3 hours of work per week for 15 weeks for every credit hour of independent study awarded.

Sage Ahead Courses

All Sage Ahead courses are consistent with the Credit Hour Policy of Russell Sage College.