

On the definition of credit hours at Auburn University:

1. From UCC, Guidelines for Specific Syllabus Components

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad_studies/univcc/Syllabus%20Guidelines.pdf):

“The number of contact hours represent the number of scheduled hours per week associated with the specific activity. Contact hours do not necessarily equal credit hours. For undergraduate course, the Academic Standards Committee has set the relationship between contact and credit hours as follows: LEC 1:1; LAB 2:1 this is the minimum. In some disciplines it is 3:1 or 4:1.”

2. From *the Tiger Cub, 2009-10*, p. 33, “Faculty Responsibilities in the Instructional Program: The University’s Concern for Good Teaching”

<http://www.auburn.edu/~chadwcd/tigercub.pdf>):

“In general, a credit hour during an academic-year semester should correspond to a total student effort of approximately 3-3.5 hours of total work per week (including in and out of class time) related to the associated course. For example, a student taking 15 credit hours in an academic-year semester (as opposed to a summer term) would correspond to a total workload of 45-53 hours of work per week for the typical student.”

3. Based on the two statements above, and some curriculum proposals approved by the UCC in the past 2 years, the following equivalences seem appropriate (though they have not received final approval by the Academic Affairs Committee, nor yet been submitted to the Academic Standards Committee for approval.)

Course Type	Contact Hrs	Credit Awarded	Recent Examples	Student time/ week	Student time/15 week sem.
Lecture / Discussion	150 min/week	3 credits		9-10.5 hours/week	135-157.5 hours
Laboratory	2-4 hours	1 credit		2-4 hours/week	30-60 hours
Internship		1 credit	BIOL, NURS	3 hours/week	45 hours**
		3 credits		9-10.5 hours/week	135-157.5 hours**
		6 credits		19-21 hrs/week	285-315 hours**
Activity	3 hours	1 credit	MUAP	3 hours/week	45 hours
Practicum	1 – 5 hours	1 credit	See below*	1-5 hours/week	15-75 hours

* - For Practicum, the range of contact hours varied, with an average of approximately three (3). Specific examples include: ANTH (1:1), PLPA (1:1), HORT (2:1), ANSC (3:1), BIOL (3:1), HRMT (3:1), THEA (4:1), FLSP (5:1). CMDS numbers: 5 cr = 30 hr/week; 6 cr = 40 hr/week.

** Based on the standard 3-3.5 hrs/1 credit formula. The 2011 Internship Task Force Report research concludes that seven is the average number of semester credit hours offered for internship, with a range of 1-12 credits offered. The Task Force Report also identifies the average number of clock hours for an internship as 455 per semester, with a range of 150-600 hours. Using the 3-3.5 hrs/week/credit hour formula, a 455 hr/semester internship translates into an 8.66 credit hour internship.

Policy Recommendation:

At Auburn University, one credit hour is defined as the unit of work that includes no less than one 50 minute period of classroom or direct faculty instruction and completion of assignments that should typically require 2 to 2.5 hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester (or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time). In other words, Auburn University expects that for each credit hour awarded, an appropriately prepared student will complete an average of 3-3.5 hours of academic work per week over the length of a 15 week semester. The same general expectation of student work exists for credits awarded for practica, internships, activity courses, laboratory experiences, and distance learning courses, although there will be variations to accommodate differences among academic disciplines.