

LTU CREDIT HOUR POLICY

The United States Department of Education and the Higher Learning Commission require that its affiliated institutions have a policy for assigning credit hours for all types of courses, disciplines, programs, credential levels, formats, regardless of modality.

Academic Calendar

LTU follows the standard academic calendar, 30 weeks of Instruction for the academic year, with semesters 15 weeks in length, fall and spring, excluding designated university closing periods. Summer sessions and accelerated (short) sessions/courses vary in length.

Credit Hour Definition

LTU's definition of a credit hour complies with federal and accreditation expectations and provides consistency throughout the University. LTU follows the Carnegie unit of measure for assigning credits to its undergraduate and graduate academic courses:

1. One credit is equivalent to 50 minutes (minimum) of direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks. However, the U.S. Department of Education has made clear that it does not intend to prescribe "seat time" minimums.
2. An equivalent amount of work is required in courses and academic activities where direct instruction is *not* the primary mode of learning. A credit hour can also be an **equivalent** amount of work for other activities as required in direct instruction, or the equivalent amount of work for other academic activities as established by the University including but not limited to internships/clinical experiences, directed studies, laboratories, studio/work, and other work leading to the award of credit hours. Credits are awarded on the basis of documented learning objectives, expected learning outcomes, and student workload expectations within a specified period of academically engaged time.
3. Hybrid and online courses require an **equivalent** amount of instruction and student work as required by in-person courses. Regardless of mode of instruction, LTU courses should be consistent in terms of quality, assessment, learning outcomes, requirements, etc. as courses offered face-to-face. Courses must demonstrate active academic engagement through interactive methods, including but not limited to, synchronous virtual classrooms, interactive content modules and tutorials, group discussions, virtual study/project groups, discussion boards, etc. Simply logging on, either by faculty or students, does not constitute active student learning. Credit hours assigned to a course delivered online must equal the number of credit hours for the same course delivered face-to-face with the same department prefix, number, and course title.

This table provides a per-week 'time on task' breakdown for courses based on credit hours and a typical 15-week semester and the Faculty Instruction and Student Engagement Time

Credits	Faculty Instruction	Student Engagement	Total Faculty/Students minutes per semester
1	50 minutes	120 minutes	2550 minutes
2	100 minutes	240 minutes	5100 minutes
3	150 minutes	360 minutes	7650 minutes
4	200 minutes	480 minutes	10200 minutes
5	250 minutes	600 minutes	12750 minutes
6	300 minutes	720 minutes	15300 minutes

LTU Course Formats and Application of Credit Hour Policy

This credit hour definition applies to all courses at all levels (undergraduate, graduate, and professional) that award academic credit, regardless of format/delivery method, and is based on a 15-week semester. Academic units are responsible for ensuring that credit hours are awarded only for work that meets the requirements outlined in this policy. This policy allows a mandatory examination period to be counted in the minutes of instruction. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Provost.

Accelerated Sessions: Courses offered in periods less than the standard 15-week semester in which the credit hours offered are the same as standard semester courses must maintain the same content and substantive learning outcomes as the standard semester version of the course. These courses must meet the definition of total faculty/student time within the time frame the accelerated version is offered (2550 minutes per credit).

Lecture/Seminar: Course focuses on principles, concepts or Ideas, lecture, discussion and demonstration. A semester credit hour is earned for fifteen, 50-minute sessions of direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of student preparation time outside of class per week throughout the semester. A typical three-credit hour course meets for three, 50-minute sessions or two, 75-minute sessions a week for fifteen weeks.

Laboratory: Practical application type courses where the major focus is on "hands on" experience to support student learning (use of equipment, activities, tools, machines generally found in a laboratory). 1- 2 Laboratory credits represents a minimum of 1 hour per week of lecture or discussion plus a minimum of 2 - 4 hours of scheduled supervised or independent laboratory work.

Studio: Courses taught as applied study on a private or semi-private basis. Private instruction ranges from 30 to 60 minutes with independent practice and peer collaboration as prescribed by the instructor and required by the course project.

Internship/Field Experience: Courses developed for independent learning and the development and application of job related or practical skills in a particular discipline. These courses allow for observation, participation, and fieldwork, and are generally offered off campus. Internship time includes a combination of supervised time by approved experts outside the university, student assignments, and work products supervised by a university instructor.

Clinical Experience: Supervised experiences where students are afforded an opportunity to apply skills and techniques acquired from assessment and intervention-oriented course material. Number of hours

varies by academic program based on clinical placement site hour requirements and student assignments.

Independent Study: Courses that permit a student to study a subject or topic in considerable depth beyond the scope of a regular course. Students meet periodically, as agreed upon with the faculty member, for the duration of the course. University faculty provides guidance, criticism, and review of the student's work. Students demonstrate competency through the completion of a final assessment either by submitting a final paper, project or portfolio, etc. as required by the faculty member. Credit hours are assigned based on the amount of activity associated with the course, faculty supervision, and amount of student outside work.

Thesis/Dissertation: Courses, where students are working on independent projects such as thesis/dissertation, will conform to the standard minimum of 50 minutes 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.

Hybrid: A course is considered hybrid (or blended) when it is composed of both online learning and classroom learning and incorporates the best features of both environments to meet the learning objectives of the course. Hybrid courses blend specified hours of direct instruction with online interactive methods, that may include but are not limited to, synchronous virtual classrooms, interactive content modules and tutorials, group discussions, virtual study/project groups, discussion boards, etc. to achieve equivalence in terms of quality, assessment, learning outcomes, requirements, etc. as their face-to-face counterpart.

Online (Synchronous): Online courses offered in a synchronous format require students to and faculty to meet virtually for 50-minute sessions of direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of student preparation time outside of class per week throughout the semester.

Online (Asynchronous): In online asynchronous courses occur instructors and students do not meet in the same space at a prespecified time. Online asynchronous courses must be **equivalent** in terms of quality, assessment, learning outcomes, requirements, etc. as courses offered face-to-face with the same department prefix, number, and course title. Faculty must demonstrate active academic engagement through interactive methods, including but not limited to, interactive tutorials, group discussions, virtual study/project groups, discussion boards, chat rooms, etc. Simply logging on, either by faculty or students, does not constitute active student learning. Credit hours assigned to a course delivered online must equal the number of credit hours for the same course delivered face-to-face.