

Piedmont Virginia Community College

Section I – Academic Affairs & Workforce Development Policies

I – 60.0 Credit Hour Definition

Effective Date: December 2014

Last Revised: March 2026

Responsible Dept.: Vice President of Academic Affairs and Workforce Development

1. Purpose

To ensure that Piedmont Virginia Community College's definition of a credit hour is consistent with the federal definition of the credit hour and conforms to the SACSCOC Policy Statement on Credit Hours.

2. Policy Statement

Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) follows the Federal definition of a semester credit hour and VCCS Policy 5.3.02: Course Credits.

3. Definitions

N/A

4. Applicability

This policy applies to all courses at PVCC.

5. Responsibilities

The Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Workforce Development is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

PVCC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. View the full nondiscrimination statement and find contacts at pvcc.edu/nondiscrimination.

6. Procedures for Implementation

PVCC defines a “semester credit hour” as being not less than one “academic hour” of formal classroom instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work per week for fifteen weeks, plus a minimum of one hour of evaluation time. An “academic hour” is defined as 50 minutes. The total instructional and evaluation time for one credit hour is 750 minutes plus the minimum 50 minutes of evaluation time for a total of 800 minutes.

One semester credit of lecture-based instruction is defined as one academic hour per week for a fifteen-week period plus an academic hour of evaluation time.

One semester credit of laboratory-based instruction, clinical training, supervised work experience, coordinated internship or other similar activities range from two to five academic hours per week for a fifteen-week period plus an evaluation hour.

One semester credit of asynchronous distance learning or hybrid-based instruction is based on the student learning outcomes being equivalent to the outcomes in the same course taught in a face-to-face section of the same course. This equivalency is determined by a peer review of the content, competency coverage, and student learning outcomes of the course.

Accelerated courses or late start face-to-face courses are required to have the same 800 minutes per credit hour of instructional and evaluation time as traditional face-to-face courses.

7. Sanctions for Violation of Policy

N/A

8. Other General Information

N/A