

MiraCosta College faculty, as empowered by Assembly Bill 1725, have primacy in the area of curriculum development and as such are responsible for managing and updating their curriculum in accordance with standards set forth by the California Code of Regulations (title 5), the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, and the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC).

The Courses and Programs Committee (CPC), a subcommittee of the Academic Senate, makes recommendations pertaining to the programs and courses offered by the college primarily to the Academic Senate. The CPC acts by means of careful study and open discussion to assure the college's curriculum has consistent quality, rigor, and compliance with state regulations and standards as well as with district policies and procedures.

The Courses and Programs Committee Handbook describes the roles and responsibilities of the CPC as well as the procedures for program and curriculum development at MiraCosta College. The handbook is reviewed annually and updated as needed by the CPC.

The MiraCosta Community College District provides annual certification to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office pertaining to the approval of credit courses and credit programs as required under title 5 sections 55100 and 55130.

Credit Hour

One credit hour of community college work (one unit of credit) shall require a minimum of 48 semester hours of total student work, which may include inside and/or outside-of-class hours.

A course requiring 96 hours or more total student work shall provide at least two units of credit. Cooperative work experience courses shall adhere to the formula for credit hour calculations identified in title 5 section 55256.5. Credit for clock hour designated programs shall be awarded consistent with 34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 600.2.

(See Administrative Procedure 4103: Experiential Education for Cooperative Work Experience credit hour calculations.)

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Reference Update:	11/14
References:	Title 5 §§51021, 55000 et seq., 55100 et seq. 34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 600.2 ACCJC Accreditation Standard II.A U.S. Department of Education regulation on the Integrity of Federal Student Financial Aid Programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended
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A. Credit Hour Calculations

Federal and state regulations for credit hour calculations are based on the total time a student spends on learning, including outside-of-class hours. The college shall use the following formula to determine the units of credit for a course:

$$(\text{total contact hours} + \text{outside-of-class hours}) / \text{hours-per-unit divisor} = \text{units of credit}$$

- Total contact hours: The total time per term that a student is under the direct supervision of an instructor or other qualified employee as defined in title 5 sections 58050, 58051, and 58161. This number is the sum of all contact hours for the course in all calculations categories, including lecture, laboratory, discussion, etc. Contact hours for courses may include hours assigned to more than one instructional category (e.g., lecture and lab, lecture and clinical).
- Outside-of-class hours: Hours students are expected to engage in coursework outside of the classroom.
- Hours-per-unit divisor: The term-length multiplier for MiraCosta College, as assigned by the Chancellor's Office, is 17. Full-length fall and spring semester classes, short- and extended-term classes, and positive attendance classes use an hours-per-unit divisor ranging from 48 to 54.

To ensure compliance with state and federal regulations related to credit hour calculations, the course outline of record for each course shall record the total number of hours in each instructional category specified in governing board policy, the total number of expected outside-of-class hours, and the total student learning hours used to calculate the award of credit.

B. Expected Ratios of In-Class to Outside-of-Class Hours

As a matter of standard practice in higher education, lecture and related course formats require two hours of student work outside-of-class for every hour in-class. All other academic work must provide an equivalent total number of student learning hours as typically required for lecture, with the ratio of in-class to outside-of-class work prorated for the instructional category. However, in the natural sciences and other disciplines, it is standard practice in higher education to base the number of units awarded for laboratory solely on contact hours, even though there may be some expectation of student work or preparation outside-of-class. These ratios are expressed as follows:

Instructional Category	In-Class Hours	Outside-of-Class Hours
Lecture (lecture, discussion, seminar, related work)	1	2
Laboratory (traditional lab, natural science lab, clinical, and similar)	3	0

C. Standards for Incremental Award of Credit

The minimum unit increment is 0.5 units. As a result, the minimum number of units for a course is a multiple of 0.5 units.

The total student learning hours required to reach a unit value are treated as a threshold. When increments are utilized, the college cannot award credits unless the total student learning hours have reached the minimum threshold for that number of units. MiraCosta College uses the following minimum and maximum hour thresholds for award of credit:

Units	Min–Max Hour Threshold
0.5	24–27
1	48–54
1.5	72–81
2	96–108
2.5	120–135
3	144–162
3.5	168–189
4	192–216
5	240–270

D. Federal Financial Aid Eligibility

For purposes of federal financial aid eligibility, a “credit hour” shall be not less than the following:

- A. 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 hour of credit or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
- B. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in the paragraph above for other academic activities as established by the college, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.