



Tuesday, September 24, 2024

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the assignment of semester credit hours awarded for all courses at MBTU. Semester credit hours at MBTU are equivalent to commonly accepted and traditionally defined units of academic measurement. Each course at MBTU is measured by achievement of established course learning outcomes and the amount of time a typical student should spend to accomplish these outcomes.

Specifically, a one (1) semester credit hour requires a minimum of 45 hours of student work with one third of the time focused on academic engagement and two-thirds of the time focused on student preparation. For a three-semester credit hour course, a minimum of 135 hours of student work is required divided between 45 hours of academic engagement and 90 hours of student preparation.

The University Clock/Credit Hour Worksheet is utilized to estimate the amount of time a student should spend to accomplish course learning outcomes to substantiate semester credit hours awarded for all courses.

Direct instruction includes:

- Instructor’s narrative
 - Text in a learning module
 - Asynchronous sessions (for online courses)
 - Video (instructor or departmentally created)
- Video from other sources (equivalent to a guest speaker or a movie watched during class time)
- Multimedia interaction (learning objects)
- Discussions
- Exams and quizzes
- Any instructor-guided activity including small group activities
- Any assignment or activity you would traditionally do “in-class”

Out-of-class student work includes:

- Readings
- Other media consumption
- Assignments
 - Papers
 - Projects
 - Research
- Group work that traditionally would be done “outside of class”

In accordance with federal regulations, online distance education courses are required to have **regular and substantive instructor-initiated interactions**, which will include **both direct instruction and student work**. All students in a course should have similar opportunities for instructor interaction, which is particularly important for courses with distance students. Incorporating active learning in online courses may make it more difficult to map “in- class” time to traditional categories of “direct instruction.” However, instructor-led activity, or group work centered around instructional activities (active learning), would also be appropriate to count as class time, in contrast to student work outside of class, and in many cases could also fulfill the regular and substantive instructor-initiated interaction requirements.

Course Time Per Week

The amount of time that should be offered in a course per week will vary with the length of the course. All our courses have 3 credit hours and a duration of 8 weeks.

Expectations and Terminology

Distance Education: Education that uses one or more of the technologies [specified in 34 CFR § 600.2] to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor or instructors and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor or instructors, either synchronously or asynchronously.

Regular interaction: Regular interaction includes substantive interactions between a student and an instructor or instructors on a predictable and scheduled basis prior to the student’s completion of a course or competency. Regular interaction entails:

- providing the opportunity for substantive interactions with the student on a predictable and scheduled basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount of content in the course or competency,
- monitoring the student’s academic engagement and success, and
- ensuring that an instructor is responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interaction with the student when needed based on such monitoring, or upon request by the student.

Substantive interaction: Substantive interaction is engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and includes at least two of the following:

- providing direct instruction.
- assessing or providing feedback on a student’s coursework.
- providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency.
- facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency; or
- other instructional activities approved by the institutions or program’s accrediting agency.

Credit hour: Credit hour is defined by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) as an amount of student work defined by an institution, as approved by the institutional accrediting body, or state approval agency, that is consistent with commonly accepted practice in postsecondary education.

Academic engagement: Academic engagement is defined as active participation by a student in an instructional activity related to the student’s course of study which includes but is not limited to:

- attending a synchronous or asynchronous session, lecture, where there is an opportunity for interaction between the instructor and students.
- submitting an academic assignment.
- taking an assessment or an exam.
- participating in a study group, group project, or an online discussion that is assigned by the institution; or
- interacting with an instructor about academic matters.