CREDITS

For the typical student, a total of forty-five (45) hours of work is required to earn one credit. Course credits are earned in a variety of educational experiences. Course credit by instruction may be achieved by a variety of educational experiences that allow the student to work toward mastery of the course objectives. The Federal definition of a credit hour (used for awarding Federal student aid) provides minimum requirements that should be consistent for all credit earned by instruction regardless of delivery method. More than the minimum may be required for mastery of course objectives.

The distribution of time between class activities and outside preparation varies from course to course regardless of the type of instruction (in person, electronic, pre-recorded content delivered through resident, online, or hybrid).

READ SENATE POLICY 42-23: CREDIT REQUIREMENTS BY TYPES OF INSTRUCTION (https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/42-00-acquisition-of-credit/)

Credit Load

Enrollment Status (Semester Credit Load)

A student's credit load is one factor that determines his/her tuition costs. The Tuition and College Cost Estimator (https://cce.psu.edu/) can be used to determine tuition based on a student's credit load (as well as other factors: residency, semester/session, campus, college, major, and credits achieved).

Definition of Full-Time Credit Load

The University considers a student full-time if he/she schedules a total of 12 or more credits, excluding course audits (https://www.registrar.psu.edu/registration/adding-dropping-auditing-courses.cfm), from any combination of credit courses through resident instruction, Continuing Education, or World Campus. However, different programs and agencies may have different definitions of full-time status. Students should check with the appropriate office(s) for information on their policies.

Definition and Implications of a Part-Time Credit Load

A student is considered part-time if he/she schedules less than 12 credits per semester. When considering part-time enrollment, students should be aware that a full-time credit load may be required by certain programs and agencies. Before scheduling less than 12 credits, students should check with the appropriate office(s) (e.g., Student Aid, Intercollegiate Athletics, International Students, Schreyer Honors College, etc,), for information on their policies.

Maintaining a Certain Credit Load (Courses with Alternative Time Frames)

Part-Semester Courses: Scheduling a part-semester course that begins after the start of the semester may allow a student to maintain full-time status.

Individualized Experiences for Credit: A student may arrange an experience such as an independent study, internship, or research project. To discuss this alternative, the student should contact a faculty member with whom he/she would like to work.

Credit Overload, more than 19 Credits

To schedule more than 19 credits, a student must add the overload (https://www.registrar.psu.edu/registration/adding-dropping-auditing-courses.cfm) credits during the drop/add period (https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/34-00-course-scheduling/). A tuition surcharge will be applied for each credit above 19. When determining an overload, the Office of the University Registrar counts audit credits (https://www.registrar.psu.edu/registration/adding-dropping-auditing-courses.cfm) as part of a semester credit load.