Credit Hour

As of July 1, 2011, federal law (600.2 and 600.4) requires all accredited institutions to comply with the federal definition of the credit hour. For all CSU degree programs and courses bearing academic credit, the "credit hour" is defined as "the amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:

1. 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 or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one-quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours."

A credit hour is assumed to be a 50 minute period. In courses in which “seat time” does not apply, a credit hour may be measured by an equivalent amount of work, as demonstrated by student achievement.

A credit hour is assumed to be a 50 minute period. In courses, in which “seat time” does not apply, a credit hour may be measured by an equivalent amount of work, as demonstrated by student achievement.

Definition of Semester Unit

One semester unit corresponds to:

• One hour (50 minutes) of direct instruction per week for fifteen weeks in a fall or spring semester for a lecture, seminar or discussion, with at least two hours of out-of-class work;
• Two hours (100 minutes) of classwork in an activity course per week for fifteen weeks, with at least one hour of out-of-class work;
• Three hours (150 minutes) of laboratory work per week for fifteen weeks in a laboratory course per week for fifteen weeks, with at least one hour of out-of-class work.

Supervision courses must likewise satisfy the credit hour requirement of 150 minutes minimum of academic work per unit per week for fifteen weeks or equivalent amount of work over a different period of time.

Courses offered in a timeframe shorter than 15 weeks (winter session, summer sessions, or during regular sessions), or scheduled to meet on a day that campus is closed, must provide the equivalent required number of hours of direct faculty instruction as defined for the credit hour.

Definition of Continuing Education Unit (CEU)

CEUs are nationally recognized units of measurement for participation in professional development programs for which academic credit is not awarded. CEUs may neither be applied to nor substituted for graduation requirements. One CEU is earned for ten hours of instruction. San Francisco State University policy requires an evaluation of student learning for all courses which award CEUs.