

# AURORA UNIVERSITY

## Federal Credit Hour Policy

**Effective:** Immediately

**Last Updated:** 5/3/22

**Responsible University Office:** Office of Academic Affairs

**Responsible Executive:** Vice President for Academic Affairs

**Approval:** Faculty Senate 5/6/22

**Scope:** All full-time and part-time faculty; departmental chairs; academic deans.

### A. REASON FOR POLICY

The Code of Federal Regulations stipulates guidelines for academic engagement which support equitable content delivery and academic rigor, as well as program quality. In general, the code stipulates that:

*A credit hour is an amount of student work defined by an institution, as approved by the institution's accrediting agency or State approval agency, that is consistent with commonly accepted practice in postsecondary education and that -*

*(1) Reasonably approximates not less than -*

*(i) 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 period of time; or*

*(ii) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1)(i) 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; and*

*(2) Permits an institution, in determining the amount of work associated with a credit hour, to take into account a variety of delivery methods, measurements of student work, academic calendars, disciplines, and degree levels.*

### B. POLICY

Each semester hour assigned to a course at Aurora University corresponds to a minimum of 50 minutes of instructional time each week over a 16-week semester, including finals week, or the equivalent amount of total instructional time per credit hour over a condensed amount of time (a three, five, eight or ten-week term). Students are also expected to do 2-3 hours of outside work (including assignments or studying) for every one semester hour of in-class time.

Aurora University expects that the total combined amount of classroom time and out-of-class student work at both the undergraduate and graduate level will adhere to this credit hour policy.

For courses that are in an alternative delivery format (laboratory work, studio work, practica, clinical, field, internships, thesis, dissertation, online or hybrid modalities, etc.) a semester hour corresponds to a mix of instructional contact, directed activities, and student work that equate to the sum of the in-class and outside time for a semester hour in a traditional course. For both traditional and alternative delivery courses, these expectations should be outlined in the course syllabus.

### **C. DEFINITIONS**

### **D. PROCEDURES**

This credit hour policy is applied to all course locations and modalities under the supervision of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. The Office of Academic Affairs works with the department chairs, academic deans, and Office of the Registrar to determine and maintain the appropriate alignment of academic engagement and credit hours assigned per course, per the Federal Credit Hour Policy and Course Modality Policy. The academic chairs and deans are initially responsible for ensuring that courses scheduled by their departments and schools comply with the Federal Credit Hour Policy. The Office of the Registrar will review course meeting times and associated credit hour assignment for alignment with the Federal Credit Hour Policy, and communicate any discrepancies to the Office of Academic Affairs. The Office of Academic Affairs will reevaluate the credit assignment for those courses and communicate needed adjustments to the Office of the Registrar and academic departments and schools.