

CREDIT HOUR POLICY

United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) uses standard practices for determining course credit for all courses and programs offered by the College. The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent measure of the quality of a student's academic engagement and to ensure accuracy of the assignment of credit hours to activities earning academic credit. The award of academic credit for a course is based on the amount of time a student receives direct instruction and works beyond instruction time on the course content.

Semester Credit Hours

UTTC operates on the semester system, with two (2) semesters (fall and spring) comprising the regular academic year. Following the spring semester, UTTC also offers a summer term comprised of a variety of class sessions and formats.

The Federal Credit Hour Definition provides that credit hours be not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately 15 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.

Definition of Credit Hour and Contact Hour

In accordance with federal regulations, a credit hour is a unit of measure representing the equivalent of an hour (50 minutes) of instruction per week over the entire term. It is applied toward the total number of credit hours needed for completing the requirements of a degree, diploma or certificate, or other award. A contact hour is a unit of measure that represents an hour of scheduled instruction given to students.

Credit Hour and Instructional Time Equivalencies

The award of a semester hour of credit is generally based upon the minimum number of minutes of instruction, or the equivalent, per term. The ratio of instructional minutes, or the equivalent to credit hours, generally varies with the type or category of instruction:

- A. **Theory** - Generally requires a minimum of one hour of contact time (50 minutes) and two hours of outside of class work for each semester hour of credit for a total of 3 hours per credit per week. Theory instruction includes lectures, recitations, discussions, demonstrations, seminars, presentations, activities, and other recognized types of instruction.
- B. **Laboratory** - Generally requires a minimum of two hours of contact time and one hour of outside of class work for each semester hour of credit for a total of 3 hours per credit per week. Instruction is focused on experimentation in a classroom, laboratory, or studio through teacher-assisted, hands-on learning experiences. A laboratory is generally required in conjunction with the theory of a science course. Work is normally completed in the learning environment, but may include out-of-class assignments such as analysis of data and/or laboratory report writing.

- C. **Practical Application Laboratory/Studio** - Generally requires a minimum of three hours of contact time and no outside class work per week for each semester hour of credit. Experience-based instruction or the equivalent focused on "real world" activities in an educational environment for the purpose of developing work-related competencies in the use of equipment, tools, machines, or other program-specific work products. Generally required in skill-intensive programs and requires limited out-of-class assignments per week. Emphasis is in the use of equipment, tools, machines, or other technologies often found within a laboratory or studio environment.
- D. **Internship** - Generally requires a minimum of four hours of contact time per week for 15 weeks for each semester hour of credit. Includes, but is not limited to, internships, apprenticeships, field placements, or clinicals. Internship involves the development of job-related skills by providing the student with a structured employment situation that is directly related to and coordinated with the educational program. Student activity in internships is planned and coordinated jointly by an institutional representative and the employer, with the employer having the responsibility for control and supervision of the student on the job. Work is normally completed in the job/learning environment, but may include other assignments.
- E. **Online** - Classes that do not have the required face-to-face contact time (hybrid or online courses) and meet the credit hour standard if they meet one of the following criteria:
 - a. The course covers the same material in the same depth as a theory version of the same course; and
 - b. The department and Office of Extended Learning have evaluated the course for content and rigor. This approval must be documented.
- F. **Workshops** - Workshops must meet the same credit hour calculation as theory classes. The minimum number of hours a workshop must meet for one earned credit hour is 40-45 hours.

***Any programs of study for which professional accreditation and/or licensing bodies (e.g. NATEF) require a minimum number of contact hours must comply with the requirements defined by that body.**

****Credit Hour Resource: UTTC uses the Course Workload Estimator to help estimate the workload for courses and to ensure the course expectations accurately reflect the aforementioned credit hour policy hour requirements (<https://cte.rice.edu/workload>).**

*****The Credit Hour Policy is incorporated into the program review procedure.**