NORTH HENNEPIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Number: 3.51	**Name:** Assignment of Credit Hours Policy
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Effective Date: November 23, 2011	**Next Review Date:** AY2015-2016
Regulatory Authority: 34 CFR 668.8 (k) and (l); Higher Learning Commission Accreditation Requirements	

Part 1. Introduction/Background

North Hennepin Community College's assignment of credit hours shall conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education. The college as a participant in Title IV federal financial aid, shall demonstrate that it has policies determining the credit hours awarded to courses and programs are keeping with commonly-accepted practices and with the federal definition of the credit hour, and have procedures that result in an appropriate awarding of institutional credit in conformity with the policies established by North Hennepin Community College.

Part 2. Definitions.

Subpart A. Federal Credit Hour Definition
A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally-established equivalency that reasonable 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 activities as established by North Hennepin Community College, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading toward the award of credit hours. OR
3. Institutionally established reasonable equivalencies for the amount of work required in paragraph (1) of this definition for the credit hours awards, including as represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement.

Subpart B. Alternative Modes of Delivery
Any course that is provided through other than the traditional 1 hour per week for each credit in a face to face classroom. This includes but is not limited to:

1. accelerated courses defined as courses with the normal number of seat time hours but in a more compressed time than a traditional semester length. May be termed late start, or early end.
2. hybrid courses defined as reduced seat time with an online component with the same outcomes as the traditional in seat class.
3. online courses defined as completely presented in an online environment with the same outcomes as the traditional in seat class.
4. internships defined as similar hours as a traditional course per credit with specific identified outcomes.

5. clinical rotations defined as at a minimum of similar hours as a traditional course per credit with specific identified outcomes. Time frames may be dictated by an accrediting agency.
6. studio defined as 2 hours of contact time per credit with the faculty in class with additional time spent outside of the class to complete the projects/assignments. Defined outcomes are equivalent to a traditional in seat class.
7. credit for prior learning credits will be assigned after demonstration of the course outcomes has been completed and documented. Refer to NHCC policy III.02.05; MnSCU Board Policy 3.35; and NHCC Procedure 111.02.05.01 for details.

Subpart C. Student Load
Traditionally, a fulltime student load would be equivalent to 12-15 credits through a traditional length semester. It is expected that a student would not take the same amount of credits during a shortened or accelerated time period. An example is that a normal load for a 6 week summer session would not exceed 8 credit; a 5 credit load would be more likely.

Part 3. Course Credit Assignments

Each new course shall be brought through the Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC) processes as a traditional style course. Each course proposal shall include the Course Outline which establishes the course outcomes and credit to be awarded based on those stated outcomes regardless of the manner of delivery for the course. See NHCC Policy 3.22 and NHCC Procedure 3.22.1 for complete details on parts of the Course Outline.

1 credit minimum requirements	1 hour of class time + 2 hours of out of class time 2 hours of laboratory time 2 hours of studio time

Part 4. Implementation

Subpart A. Information Disseminated to Faculty
1. New Faculty Orientation. The course outline and its location are given to all new faculty both during the all college new faculty orientation and by the specific academic dean. All faculty are expected to follow the course outline as a minimum for their courses.
2. AASC Meeting Minutes. Disseminated to all college and posted to NHCC Intranet. All faculty are expected to be up to date on changes in their areas.

Subpart B. Information Dissemination to Students
Course outline information is available on the website at
http://www.nhcc.edu/main/ProgramsAndMajors/CourseDescriptions.aspx

Subpart C. Alternative Modes of Delivery
All faculty teaching the same course are expected to address all of the course outcomes set per the course outline process and assess the outcomes regardless of the mode of delivery to ensure that credits are equivalent.

Subpart D. Evaluation of Credit Hour Designation
As part of the program/discipline review process, course material, course outcomes, and assessment of outcomes are reviewed to see if the outcomes and assessments for courses are consistent with standard expectations for any class of that credit designation. Refer to NHCC policy III.02.13 and NHCC procedure III.02.13.01 for details. In addition, as part of the course evaluation form, students self-report on time spent outside of class which can be an additional way of supporting credit hour designation.

Part 5. Other Policies and Procedures

All currently effective policies and procedures remain in effect to support this policy, including Faculty Evaluation, Course Syllabi and Course Outlines, AASC procedures, MnSCU Board Policies, Program Review, and accrediting body requirements – institution and program levels.

Policy Review Action	Date(s)
Campus Community Review Period	
Shared Governance Council Review	
Bargaining Unit Review	
Student Senate Review (student-related policies)	
President Approval	
Campus Community Dissemination	

History