

## COURSE FORMAT AND CREDIT HOUR

### I. Policy Section

#### 7.0 Instruction

### II. Policy Subsection

#### 7.13 Course Format and Credit Hour

### III. Policy Statement

- A. Courses are the way in which the curricular content and experiences are delivered. Course formats are purposefully defined in the context of the goals and expectations of students and their learning. Course learning outcomes must be met regardless of delivery modality and/or location. A credit hour gives value to an amount of work in the course. The credit hour is determined by the amount of contact required based on course format for the equivalent of 840 minutes. Course formats require out of class student learning at a minimum of two hours per one credit hour. Unless specified below, students will only receive credit for the same course one time. GRCC provides an extensive array of courses with varying purposes for students, including the following types:
1. General Education: Meets the specific criteria for a GRCC Distribution Requirement. The course should be designated by the requirement it fulfills.
  2. Program Requirement: Meets the learning needs of students in a specific GRCC program.
  3. Elective: Expands learning opportunities for degree seeking students. May or may not be required for students in a specific GRCC program.
  4. Community Interest: For non-degree seeking students based on an expressed interest or need.
  5. Continuing Education: Meets the specific requirements of a profession for continuing education credit.
  6. Developmental: Prepares a student for college readiness.
- B. Courses are offered in a variety of formats, each with a minimum requirement for contact hours. Exceptions to these requirements may only be made if congruent with accreditation standards. The formats, definitions, and contact hour requirements are as follows:
1. Lecture: A course in which content is primarily delivered through presentations of facts, principles, context, or interpretation.  
Credit to Contact Hour Ratio – 1:1
  2. Laboratory: A course which is focused on the implementation

- of an instructional strategy particular to a discipline and allows students to interact directly with natural phenomena, materials, or models, work with existing data, or engage in data collection. Credit to Contact Hour Ratio – 1:1 (min.) (may vary depending upon course learning outcomes and/or should align with transfer partner institutions)
3. Lecture/Lab: A course which integrates both lecture and lab formats. Credit to Contact Hour Ratio – Must meet Lecture and Laboratory Ratios
  4. Seminar: A course which focuses on a specific area of enrichment and/or curricular interest and need that is not regularly offered by a department. Credit to Contact Hour Ratio – 1:1
  5. Clinical: A course that is part of an academic program and allows students to be supervised by a GRCC instructor while applying methods and principles of a clinical discipline, and which takes place in a clinical setting, including practice labs, hospitals, or other agencies. Credit to Contact Hour Ratio – 1:3 (min.) (may vary depending upon course learning outcomes, and/or should align with transfer partner institutions)
  6. Music Ensembles: A course in which the primary purpose is to prepare and offer opportunities for students to perform instrumental or vocal music as a group. Students may repeat a single Music Ensemble course for credit a maximum of 4 times. Credit to Contact Hour Ratio – 1:2-3
  7. Studio: A course involving the demonstration and application of design and theory in a defined physical setting (i.e., studio) and which is characterized by significant one-on-one student/instructor interaction. Students explore and experiment under the guidance of an instructor. Students may repeat Music Studio courses for credit a maximum of 4 times. Credit to Contact Hour Ratio – 1:1-2
  8. Fieldwork: A course, supervised by a professional, which allows students to practice and apply their learning or investigation in the field. Credit to Contact Hour Ratio – 1:1-4
  9. Independent Study: A learning experience in which the student and instructor agree upon a topic of study, learning outcomes, and number of credits that are awarded for the work. Credit to Contact Hour Ratio – 1:1 (min.)
  10. Internship: A course which provides students an opportunity to engage in the practical application of prior learning in a supervised, professional experience, paid or unpaid, guided by learning outcomes, that build on and enhance previous coursework. Credit to Contact Hour Ratio – 1:4-6
  11. Physical Activity: A course devoted to participation in or the

- performance of some form of physical activity. Knowledge associated with the proper performance of the activity is also presented. Credit to Contact Hour Ratio – 1:2
12. Practicum: A course that provides site-based field experiences, supervised by a professional in the field, in which students observe, participate, and apply academically acquired knowledge identified in course learning outcomes. Credit to Contact Hour Ratio – 1:3 (min.) (may vary depending upon course learning outcomes and/or should align with transfer partner institutions)
13. Tutorial: A course that provides individualized instruction in a particular subject matter. Credit to Contact Hour Ratio – 1:2
14. Applied Music: Private lessons on all instruments and voice. Students may repeat Applied Music courses for credit when the topic is different a maximum of 4 times. Credit to Contact Hour Ratio – 1:1
- IV. Reason for the Policy  
The GRCC Course Format and Credit Hour Policy establishes guidelines and standards for GRCC courses.
- V. Entities Affected by this Policy  
GRCC Faculty  
GRCC Students  
GRCC Staff
- VI. Who Should Read this Policy  
GRCC Faculty  
GRCC Students  
GRCC Staff
- VII. Related Documents  
GRCC College Catalog  
GRCC Curriculum Policy (7.18)  
GRCC General Education Distribution Requirements and Outcomes
- VIII. Contacts  
Policy Owner: ISIP  
Registrar's Office  
Director of Curriculum Development and Assessment
- IX. Definitions  
See Policy Statement above for Definitions related to this policy.
- X. Procedures  
This policy guides the establishment and revision of courses, including the

type of course, course format, and credit/contact hours as part of the College's curriculum development process. In that process, faculty launch proposals in GRCC's curriculum management system, Curriculog (<https://grcc.curriculog.com/>), to facilitate this development, whereby proposals are reviewed and then ultimately approved by the Curriculum Approval Team.

Course types, formats, and credit/contact hour requirements will be reviewed according to the five-year revision cycle for each course.

Faculty members are encouraged to work with their Dean, as appropriate, to determine credit/contact hours for courses throughout this process.

XI. Forms

This policy will be operationalized through all curriculum development processes. There are no specific curriculum policy forms. Please see GRCC's curriculum management system, Curriculog, for additional information (<https://grcc.curriculog.com/>).

XII. Effective Date

Initially implemented in Fall 2019; Revisions effective for immediate implementation beginning in August 2025.

XIII. Policy History

AGC Approved January 2012

Reviewed by AGC in 2016/17 and approved in Fall 2017

Applied Music Format added to curriculum development processes, per Provost, during implementation of Fall 2017 decision

Applied Music Format updated and added to policy document, per Provost, in Fall 2020

AGC approved changes to the revised policy on 2/8/22

AGC approved changes to the revised policy on 4/8/25

XIV. Next Review/Revision Date

2027-28