

Bethany Theological Seminary

Academic Credit Hour and Course Workload Policy (from Student Handbook)

Bethany offers courses with academic credit in terms of semester credit hours. The amount of credit hours assigned is determined by a combination of the number of hours per week in class (i.e., “direct faculty instruction”) and the amount of time spent in preparation outside of class by the student.

Bethany offers courses in a variety of formats: weekly (twice-a-week and block), weekend intensives, two-week intensives, online, hybrid, and independent study.

Definition of academic credit hour:

- One unit of academic credit is assigned for each hour of “lecture” (contact with instructor that is content-oriented as “direct faculty instruction”) for 14 to 16 one-hour sessions.
- For each hour of “lecture”, it is expected that an additional 2-3 hours per session would be spent outside of class time in reading, writing, research, and preparation. It is expected that a student would read approximately 500 pages per credit hour [understanding that the difficulty of the reading should be considered in determining what and how much is assigned].
- Therefore, a 3-credit hour course would meet for the equivalent of 14 to 16 three-hour sessions, with 6 to 9 hours per session of outside reading, writing, research, and preparation. Students would read approximately 1500 pages for a 3-credit hour course [understanding that the difficulty of the reading should be considered in determining what and how much is assigned].
- Courses assigned with fewer than 3-credit hours will base “contact” time and workload as the appropriate percentage of a 3-credit hour course. For example, using the standard for a 3-credit course, 1-credit would be 1/3; 1.5-credit would be 1/2; 2-credit would be 2/3.
- These guidelines for offering academic credit are consistent with the credit hour definition found in the Department of Education regulation 34 CFR § 600.2.

In course formats that incorporate or use distance education models (online, hybrid), contact hours are defined according to the same Department of Education standard which notes that academic engagement for a course includes such thing as “submitting an academic assignment; taking an exam; an interactive tutorial, or computer-assisted instruction; attending a study group that was assigned by the institution; contributing on an academic online discussion; and initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studies in the course” (34 CFR § 600.2). Courses in these formats will contain assignments (both online and reading) so that a hybrid or online course will be consistent with the workload expected in a course in one of the other formats. This may be done by adjusting student assignments, such as more reading, more discussion online, more postings, and other means of academic engagement in comparison to courses in other formats.

Procedure for Review and Compliance:

All syllabi are submitted by faculty to the Academic Dean's Office, which reviews them for compliance with the expected content (as contained in a provided Syllabus Template) and workload relative to the above Credit Hour Policy. The full syllabus for all courses (new and recurring) taught by regular faculty are due to the Dean's Office for review six weeks prior to the start of the course. Adjunct faculty are required to submit syllabi seven weeks prior. Any required revisions will be requested, and the updated version submitted again for review before the syllabus is made available to students.