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Graduate Course and Credit Regulations



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A. Credit Hour Definition

A credit is a measurement of course work completed satisfactorily. Ordinarily, one semester-hour credit is given for one hour of class attendance a week for a period of one semester. However, in some courses, such as laboratory courses, two or three "clock hours" of attendance a week are required to earn one semester hour. A specified number of credits must be earned for a degree. Other colleges and universities may operate on a "quarter basis," that is, dividing the year into four quarters and giving quarter credits. Quarter credits multiplied by two-thirds equal semester credits. Semester credits multiplied by one and one-half equal quarter credits.

B. Curriculum Definition

The term curriculum is generally used to refer to the total academic program of the University or the academic program of a single college or the academic program of an individual department. The curriculum thus includes both course offerings and degree programs

C. Classification of Courses

(Courses numbered below 400 are offered only for undergraduate credit.)

- 400-499 These course numbers may carry a G, which means that graduate students must take them for graduate credit. Instructors are required to distinguish different assignments and grading practices for graduate and undergraduate students in 400G courses.
- 500-999 Graduate-level courses open only to graduate students.

D. Course Limitations and Restrictions

1. General limitations on graduate coursework include the following:
 - a. Only courses approved by the Graduate Council may be taken for graduate credit.
 - b. A student cannot receive graduate credit for any course without having been admitted to the Graduate School prior to enrolling in the course. A student cannot receive graduate credit for any course in which a freshman or sophomore student is enrolled.
2. Graduate credit cannot be earned for a course previously completed for undergraduate credit with an undergraduate grade recorded. The course may not be rescheduled for graduate credit, nor may the undergraduate credit be changed retroactively to graduate credit.
3. Credits applied toward a non-doctoral degree may not be older than six years.
4. Graduate credit cannot be earned through credit examinations.
5. A non-doctoral student may earn a maximum of 6 semester-hours of graduate credit for application toward a graduate degree in courses in the sequence 497-498, 597-598, and 697-698 or in other individual or special-studies courses. A doctoral student may earn a maximum of 12 hours of credit in such courses for application toward the Ph.D. degree.

E. Course Load

1. The maximum course load for a graduate student is 16 semester hours during a regular semester or 9 during a summer session. Under special circumstances, a student registered for graduate work

- may also pursue undergraduate courses for undergraduate credit. In such cases, the maximum number of hours, both graduate and undergraduate, is 16 during a regular semester or 9 during a summer session.
2. To qualify as a full-time student, a graduate student must carry a minimum of 9 semester credit hours during a regular semester and a minimum of 6 semester credit hours during a summer session.
 3. No specific minima are specified for part-time students. The course load for a part-time student shall be adjusted according to the time devoted to graduate classes, research, and study.
 4. A graduate assistant must be a full-time student during any semester in which an assistantship is held. The academic load for a graduate assistant shall be adjusted to fit the particular situation. Assistants with full assistantship responsibilities must take 9 semester hours of graduate-level courses during a semester.

F. Credit Hour Policy

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette adheres to the Louisiana State Board of Regents' Seat-time Policy for Academic Credit, which states, in part, that

All classes [awarding three credits] must be of reasonable length and include both content and contact sufficient to maintain high academic quality and standards commensurate with credit hours awarded for a "traditional" three semester-hour lecture class.

The student learning outcomes for a course must be the same, regardless of whether the credit hour(s) is/are delivered in the traditional format or through equivalent academic activities. For online, hybrid, or other courses offered in non-traditional format where no traditional course section is available for comparison, courses must include contact and content sufficient to maintain high academic quality and standards commensurate with credit hours awarded and parallel to equivalent face-to-face courses. This includes but is not limited to internships, independent studies, experiential learning activities, and online courses. For all modes of delivery, instructors' expectations for learner participation in required course interactions (frequency, length, time minimums) must be clearly stated, and must constitute equivalent instruction to other modes of deliver of the same or similar course material.

G. Transfer of Credit Policy

1. The Graduate School recognizes the appropriateness of accepting credits completed at another regionally-accredited institution for coursework there that is equivalent to coursework here. The principle involved is one of correspondence between credit asked for and credit offered in the Graduate School. A maximum of 12 semester hours of transfer graduate credit may be applied toward fulfillment of requirements for the master's degree. The number of hours transferred may not, however, exceed one-third of the semester hours required for the degree. The maximum number which can be transferred in a 30 or 33 hour program is 9. An unspecified number of semester hours of transfer graduate credit may be applied toward fulfillment of requirements toward the doctoral degree, but the majority of credits toward a graduate degree must be earned at UL Lafayette. Transfer of graduate credit requires the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School and is subject to the following conditions:
 - a. The student must be a degree-seeking student in regular admission status. A student may not have graduate credits transferred to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette while in conditional status.
 - b. The student shall have earned the credits in residence as a graduate student in an accredited United States institution that regularly grants the master's degree and/or the doctoral degree. Transfer credits from non-U.S. institutions may be granted upon special petition to the Graduate Appeals Committee. In such cases, the evidence presented in favor of transfer shall be extremely persuasive.
 - c. The credits must not have been earned after having become ineligible to continue graduate study at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.
 - d. Each course transferred must be acceptable to the student's major department.
 - e. A grade of B or better must have been earned in each course.
 - f. Time limitations must be satisfied. Credits applied toward a master's degree may not be older than six years; seven years for a doctoral degree.
 - g. The application for transfer must be made in writing according to the procedure specified by the Graduate School office.
 - h. A University of Louisiana at Lafayette graduate student wishing to earn course credits at another institution to be applied toward completion of degree requirements is urged first to secure prior written permission from the major department and the Dean of the Graduate School.
2. Transfer of credit shall not reduce minimum residence requirements.
3. Written notification of the action taken on a transfer request will be given to the student.
4. Transfer of graduate credit does not automatically mean application of such credit toward completion of degree requirements. Use of transferred credits for a curriculum other than the one for which they were originally intended requires approval of the department concerned and the Dean of the Graduate School.

5. A student wishing to use credits earned while in Entrée status toward completion of degree requirements must have such credits transferred to the degree program, meeting all the appropriate conditions specified above. No more than 2 courses taken while in Entrée status can be applied to the fulfillment of degree requirements.
6. In the case of multiple master's degrees, as many as 9 semester hours of graduate credit earned at a regionally accredited American institution and applied toward one master's degree may be used towards a second master's degree. The department in which the second degree is pursued and the Dean of the Graduate School must both approve the request. Credit toward a second master's degree may not be at variance with regulations regarding residence requirements, grade-point average, or restrictions on transfer of credit.

H. Committee on Graduate Curriculum Guidelines

The purpose of the Graduate Curriculum Committee is to evaluate graduate course additions, deletions, or changes and to make recommendations to the Graduate Council.

The committee shall follow University style and guidelines as set by offices of Academic Affairs and the Registrar for course additions, deletions, and changes.

Prior to reaching the committee, the completed forms signed by the individual initiating the course change, the department head/school director, and the dean of the college are sent to an administrative staff member in the Academic Affairs to check for compliance with the University style guide and completion of information. If style is incorrect or information is missing, a member of the Academic Affairs staff shall work with the Graduate School staff to gather the necessary information and/or shall return forms to the individual who initiated the form.

Upon review and acceptance by Academic Affairs and the Graduate School, completed forms signed by the individual initiating the course change, the department head/school director, and the dean of the college, are digitized by the Graduate School and provided to the committee chairperson to facilitate committee review. In evaluating the courses the major concerns of the committee are the following:

1. The clarity of the course title, description, and any prerequisite and/or co-requisite requirements.
2. The justification for the course addition, deletion, or change to the course.
3. Duplication and/or infringement on another department's domain.
4. Quality of the course, qualifications of the faculty, and resources available for the course.

Course proposals may be tentatively approved by the committee pending satisfactory explanation of minor questions. Final approval is left to the discretion of the committee chairperson. Courses not approved by the committee are sent back to the department from which they originated with an explanation of why the course was not approved.

The committee considers course proposals, makes recommendations for approval/denial, and submits a written report to the Graduate Council. A copy of the report is presented to the members of the Graduate Council for consideration and approval. Course proposals approved by the committee are presented to the Graduate Council for its approval.



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