

## Elaboration of Credit Hour Policy

[Adopted April 26, 2023]

The UC Law SF Credit Hour Policy is posted on the external website, [here](#). UC Law SF's credit hour policy tracks the language of our accrediting agency, the American Bar Association, in ABA Standard 310, [here](#).<sup>1</sup>

UC Law SF schedules class time so that it satisfies the Credit Hour Policy. Thus, a one-unit class meets for 13 weeks for 60 minutes per class session.<sup>2</sup> A two-unit class must meet for two hours (120 minutes, plus any break time) per week. In our block schedule, that normally means that a two-unit class meets once per week for 130 minutes (two hours plus a 10 minute break between the hours). To comply with the Credit Hour Policy, classes should not end early, and makeup classes need to be scheduled if, for any reason, a class needs to be cancelled. For guidance on whether online content can be substituted for in-person class instruction time, see this [Policy Limiting Online Content in In-Person Classes](#).

Also, to comply with the Credit Hour Policy, faculty must design their syllabi so that students are expected to reasonably do at least 2.3 hours of out-of-class work for each hour of class time.<sup>3</sup> That could include a combination of required reading, paper assignments, problem sets, and other expected out-of-class activity, including final exam prep. Out-of-class time should be designed and the expectations of out-of-class work should be clear in the syllabus (e.g., assigned reading, practice sets, etc.). That is one reason syllabi should break down the expected work to be done by students in anticipation of each class day. Faculty who are assigning reading are in the best position to know how much time it should take students to complete the reading based on factors such as the density and complexity of the reading material.

Overall, the combination of in-class and out-of-class time must be, at a minimum, 42.5 hours per unit per semester. For some credit-bearing experiences, the Academic Regulations specify higher minimum hours requirements per credit-hour awarded.

---

<sup>1</sup> Note that this policy applies to degree programs other than the UCSF/UC Law SF joint Master of Science, Health Policy & Law degree. That degree program has its own credit hour policy which conforms to WASC standards.

<sup>2</sup> The basis for this is that we're adapting ABA Standard 310, which assumes a 15-week semester and 50-min credit hours, to our 13-week semester (14 weeks, including exams). That is why UC Law SF also requires slightly more out-of-class time per unit than does the ABA Standard (2.3 hours of out-of-class work for each hour of class time rather than just 2 hours), i.e., we have a 13 week semester, not the 15-week semester assumed in Standard 310. In the end, we land in the same spot, i.e., a combination of in-class and out-of-class time that equals at least 42.5 hours per unit of academic credit.

<sup>3</sup> In exam courses, the amount of out-of-class work time per credit per week could be lower – closer to 2 hours for each hour of class time, counting the time spent during the exam period preparing for and taking exams. 2.3 hours per credit per week is just the average for all classes. However, for ease of application, we use the 2.3 hours per hour of class time figure for out-of-class work for all classes.

Special guidance on credit hours may be obtained from the Associate Dean for Experiential Learning or the Director of Externships with regard to clinics and externships or from Faculty Director of Online Legal Education Abe Cable with regard to asynchronous [online courses](#).

Faculty proposing new courses must explain how their courses satisfy the Credit Hour Policy, and the Curriculum Committee and Faculty will consider that as a factor when deciding whether to approve new classes.

Faculty members who have questions about the application of this Policy to any particular class should contact the Provost & Academic Dean.