

RWU Credit-Hour Policy

(Revised 1-24-25) (Approved by Faculty Senate 1/31/25 with a note)

1. Accrediting Agency Polices:

All Roberts Wesleyan University degree and certificate programs are approved by the New York State Education Department (NYSED). The University's credit-hour calculations for degree and certificate programs follow NYSED and MSCHE guidelines, both of which are based on the U.S. Department of Education's definition of *credit hour*.

The faculty in each school are responsible for recommending all aspects of the curriculum and degree program requirements for all school programs, including the credit hours associated with each. The Faculty Senate gives final approval to curricular and degree program requirements.

The following statement appears in each course syllabus: "The number of hours of instruction and preparation time for this course complies with the NYSED and MSCHE guidelines as outlined in the RWU Credit-Hour Policy. This policy can be found in all RWC Academic Catalogs under Credit Hour Assignment." [Note: Credit Hour Assignment should be linked to the full policy in electronic versions of syllabi.]

● United States Department of Education – Credit Hour Definition

The U.S. Department of Education defines *credit hour* as: An amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably 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 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 academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Source: Code of Federal Regulations - 34 CFR § 600.2

● NYSED – Credit Hour Definition

All courses and degree programs at the University must comply with Section 50.1 (o) of the New York State Commissioner of Education Regulations:

Semester hour means a credit, point, or other unit granted for the satisfactory completion of a course which requires at least 15 hours (of 50 minutes each) of instruction and at least 30 hours of supplementary assignments, except as otherwise provided pursuant to section 52.2(c)(4) of this Subchapter.

This basic measure shall be adjusted proportionately to translate the value of other academic calendars and formats of study in relation to the credit granted for study during the two semesters that comprise an academic year. [While] "instruction" is provided differently in online/hybrid courses than in class-room based courses . . . the total time spent on these tasks should be roughly equal to that spent in

class-room based courses.

Sources: NYSED Commissioner's Regulations Concerning Program Registration: 50.1 Definitions; NYSED Program Registration Policies/Distance Education Program Policies/Determining Time on Task in Online (and Hybrid) Education

● **Middle States Commission on Higher Education – Credit Hour Definition**

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education expects all candidate and accredited institutions to demonstrate that they use acceptable and consistent methods for assigning credit hours to all courses and programs of study.

An amount of student work defined by an institution, as approved by the institution's accrediting agency or State approval agency, that is consistent with commonly accepted practice in postsecondary education and that (1) reasonably approximates not less than (i) 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 period of time; or (ii) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours; and (2) permits an institution, in determining the amount of work associated with a credit hour, to take into account a variety of delivery methods, measurements of student work, academic calendars, disciplines, and degree levels.

Source: MSCHE Credit Hour Policy Effective August 23, 2012 Rev. October 30, 2012

2. RWU Credit-Hour Policies Based on These Guidelines

Class-room based lecture courses

- Required instructional time per credit: 12.5 hours (750 minutes)
 - 50 minutes per week in a 15-week course
 - 94 minutes per week in an 8-week course
 - 107 minutes per week in a 7-week course
 - 150 minutes per week in a 5-week course
 - 188 minutes per week in a 4-week course
- Required out-of-class preparation time: 25 hours (1500 minutes)
 - 100 minutes per week in a 15-week course
 - 188 minutes per week in an 8-week course
 - 214 minutes per week in a 7-week course
 - 300 minutes per week in a 5-week course
 - 376 minutes per week in a 4-week course

Online lecture courses

- Required instructional time per credit: 12.5 hours (750 minutes) engaged in instructional interaction with faculty and other students – e.g., viewing/reading relevant content information shared by faculty, posting responses to assignments/other students, participating in required “chats” with faculty/other students, etc.
 - 50 minutes per week in a 15-week course
 - 94 minutes per week in an 8-week course
 - 107 minutes per week in a 7-week course
 - 150 minutes per week in a 5-week course
 - 188 minutes per week in a 4-week course
- Required outside-of-instruction preparation time: 25 hours (1500 minutes)
 - 100 minutes per week in a 15-week course
 - 188 minutes per week in an 8-week course
 - 214 minutes per week in a 7-week course
 - 300 minutes per week in a 5-week course
 - 376 minutes per week in a 4-week course

Hybrid lecture courses

- Required instructional time per credit: 12.5 hours (750 minutes) engaged in some combination of in-class and online instruction
 - 50 minutes per week in a 15-week course
 - 94 minutes per week in an 8-week course
 - 107 minutes per week in a 7-week course
 - 150 minutes per week in a 5-week course
 - 188 minutes per week in a 4-week course
- Required outside-of-instruction preparation time: 25 hours (1500 minutes)
 - 100 minutes per week in a 15-week course
 - 188 minutes per week in an 8-week course
 - 214 minutes per week in a 7-week course
 - 300 minutes per week in a 5-week course
 - 376 minutes per week in a 4-week course

Studio Art courses

- Required instructional time per credit: 25 hours (1500 minutes)
 - 100 minutes per week in a 15-week course
 - 188 minutes per week in an 8-week course
 - 300 minutes per week in a 5-week course
 - 376 minutes per week in a 4-week course
- Required preparation time requirements: 12.5 hours (750 minutes)
 - 50 minutes per week in a 15-week course
 - 94 minutes per week in an 8-week course
 - 150 minutes per week in a 5-week course
 - 188 minutes per week in a 4-week course

Clinical/Laboratory/Internship courses

- Required instructional time per credit: 37.5 hours (2250 minutes) in some combination of class-room and online instruction
 - 150 minutes per week in a 15-week course
 - 282 minutes per week in an 8-week course
 - 450 minutes per week in a 5-week course

- 563 minutes per week in a 4-week course
- Required out-of-class preparation time per credit: 0 hours/minutes per week.

Directed Studies

- Required instructional/prep time:
 - 1 credit: 6 contact hours (360 minutes) with supervising professor (regardless of the timeframe for the course) and 31.5 hours (1890 minutes) of preparation time
 - 2 credits: 8 contact hours (480 minutes) with supervising professor and 75 hours (4500 minutes) of preparation time
 - 3 credits: 10 contact hours (600 minutes) with supervising professor and 102.5 hours (6150 minutes) of preparation time

Independent Studies

- Required instructional/prep time:
 - 1 credit : 2 contact hours (150 minutes) with supervising professor (regardless of the timeframe for the course) and 35 hours (2100 minutes) of preparation time
 - 2 credits: 4 contact hours (240 minutes) with supervising instructor and 71 hours (4260 minutes) of preparation time
 - 3-credits: 6 contact hours (360 minutes) with supervising instructor and 106.5 hours (6390 minutes) of preparation time