

**UMass Chan Medical School
Credit Hour Definitions and Audit Process
Updated 3-22-2022**

The UMass Chan Medical School, which consists of its T.H. Chan School of Medicine, the Tan Chingfen Graduate School of Nursing and the Morningside Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, fulfills the following Federal definition of a credit hour:

“Except as provided in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (1), a credit hour is 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 each week for approximately 15 weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or 10-12 weeks for one quarter hours 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.”

Faculty and Student Notifications:

The credit hour assignments will be available on websites where they can be accessed by individuals or offices with UMMS credentials for inclusion in appropriate materials. It will also be presented at relevant curriculum committee meetings to ensure faculty awareness.

Morningside Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Course Credit Hour Assignments

All new courses, their associated syllabi, methods of student evaluation and credit hours must be reviewed by the Graduate Council Curriculum Subcommittee. Once approved by this Subcommittee, the course is presented for approval to the Graduate Council, a body of representative faculty, students and administrators selected by each program and appointed by the GSBS Dean. An approved course returns to the Graduate Council for review only when the content, evaluation methodology or credit hours are significantly altered or when student evaluations of the course demand the attention of the GSBS Dean, Graduate Council and/or the faculty.

- One credit hour is assigned to a course per (minimum) three hours of effort/week, for a 12-20 week semester. “Effort” consists of any combination of active contact hours and preparation time. For example, BBS 614 is a six-credit hour course, and requires a minimum of nine contact hours and a minimum of nine hours of preparation time per week, for the fall term.
- Students undertake two eight-week lab rotations each in the fall and in the spring and one 12-week rotation in summer. The eight-week rotations require 160 hours of

research each and each is assigned three credit hours. The twelve-week rotation involves over 400 hours of research and each is assigned six credit hours.

T.H. Chan School of Medicine Course Credit Hour Assignments

Existing Curriculum:

Each grade-granting course is assigned credits based on the following process, which builds on standard educational benchmarking and local expertise in curriculum development and expectations for clinical work:

- Year 1-2 foundational curricula: approximately 15 structured independent learning, remote learning or classroom hours and two out-of-classroom hours per classroom hour/semester (or other mix of educational experiences to meet minimum 45 hours) = one credit
- Years 2-4 core clinical and elective experiences: one week = one credit
- Year 3-4 required sub-internship: one week = one credit
- The allocation of credits for less than 1 hour shall be in 0.5 increments only.

The Credit-Hours Work Group (CHWG) will present the slate of course credit hours annually to the relevant curriculum sub-committee of the Education Policy Committee (EPC) for review and endorsement, and to the full EPC at the request of the EPC curriculum sub-committee.

New Course Development:

Newly approved courses will apply this metric to confirm appropriate credit.

Adjustment:

- The CHWG will be convened at least once annually approximately three months before the start of the academic year to review any need to adjust policy or procedure, and on an ad hoc basis throughout the year as time sensitive issues arise. These meetings will be called by the CHWG Chair, the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education.
- The credit-hours work group consists of the Associate Deans for Undergraduate Medical Education and Student Affairs, Chairs of the EPC curriculum sub-committees, Chairs of the Basic and Clinical Sciences Academic Evaluation Boards, the Registrar and the Financial Aid Director.
- A sub-committee with expertise in elements unique to the MD/PhD program will meet annually and as needed to address credit-hour issues related to that program. This MD/PhD CHWG will be comprised of the Dean of the GSBS, the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education, the Chair of the relevant EPC sub-committee, MD/PhD leadership, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and other content experts as necessary.
- This document and credit determinations will be posted on the EPC website.

- After the annual credit hours meeting the policy and credit table will be distributed to course leaders through curriculum committee distribution and referenced in the course leadership handbook.

Tan Chingfen Graduate School of Nursing Course Credit Hour Assignments

All new courses, their associated syllabi, methods of student evaluation and credit hours must be reviewed by the responsible Program Director. They are then sent to the Curriculum Committee for approval. After approval by the Curriculum Committee, they are sent to the Faculty Assembly for full endorsement and final approval. Approved courses are reviewed by the Program Directors only when the content, evaluation methodology or credit hours are significantly altered or when course/student evaluations indicate the need. The Program Director would then follow the same course of action identified for new courses.

At the graduate level, the expectation for course effort is three hours of course work outside of class each week in addition to the weekly contact hours/classroom time. For example, in a three-credit hour course the expectation is that students spend nine hours per week outside in addition to the 15 hours of classroom engaged in course material.

Clinical hours:

Pre-licensure clinical hours (500 level clinical) are allocated as one credit per 45 contact hours. Graduate clinical hours (600 level) are allocated as one credit per 90 contact hours.

Credit Hour Audit Process

The Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education in the SOM, the Dean of the GSBS and the Dean of the GSN will annually supply a list of all credit granting courses to an individual appointed by the Provost, who will select two courses from each of the three schools for an audit to determine credit hour compliance with this document. This individual will formally notify each of these three individuals concerning the initial results of this audit. If there is a disagreement concerning the findings, the individual will meet with the individual for further discussion. The individual will report the final audit conclusions to the Provost.