

## **Simpson College Statement on Assignment of Credit-June 24, 2011, Amended July 26, 2012**

In assigning credit to its courses, Simpson College follows the U.S. Department of Education definitions. Each course at Simpson College is assigned an appropriate amount of credit based on the direct instruction of faculty and the outside-of-class work expected of students enrolled in the course. Simpson College offers courses in a variety of formats (face-to-face, online, and hybrid). Terms vary in length from eight to 15 weeks. No matter the format or length of term, the students enrolled must meet the learning objectives established for the course, and each course meets the requirements for credit established by the U.S. Department of Education.

Courses at Simpson College are typically assigned one, two, three or four credits. Many courses at Simpson College meet the common definition of credit established by the U.S. Department of Education (i.e., one hour of classroom or direct instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each semester for approximately 14 weeks of class, plus finals week equals one credit). Other courses meet the U.S. Department of Education standard by using a combination of in-class instruction, online direct instruction, and other types of instructor-directed activity, including service-learning, laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, or other academic work that is directed and supervised by the faculty member, coupled with required outside-of-class activity, e.g., reading, working on projects, writing papers, creating art work, developing presentations, etc. The combined in-class time and outside of class hours make up the minimum "learning time" or "engaged time" expected of the student.

The college assigns credit to courses by way of a rigorous peer review process which includes review by a specific faculty curriculum committee, the full faculty, and the administration to ensure that each course, no matter the format or term length, meets the learning objectives set for the course and that the credit assigned to the course meets the U.S. Department of Education standards.

### **Simpson College Policy on Learning Time**

In order to clearly demonstrate that Simpson College courses meet the U.S. Department of Education and Higher Learning Commission guidelines and standards, all syllabi published after July 1, 2011 will include both a definition of credit and a good faith estimate of learning time associated with the course. This learning time includes the time spent in class, all time spent in instructor-directed activity, and the minimum number of hours the average student is expected to be engaged with the course material. Simpson College has determined that the learning-time-to-credit equivalence is roughly 35 hours per credit. This is based on the general current expectation for a three-credit class of two hours of outside-of-class activity for each hour of class (150 minutes in class + 300 minutes out of class x 14 weeks of class = 6,300 minutes = 105 hours for a three-credit course). Thus, for each credit awarded to a course, the students can expect to spend 35 hours in the classroom, participating in instructor-directed activity, or preparing for class.

For 15 week terms (14 weeks of class + finals):

- Courses that are 4 credits—students should be engaged at least 9 to 10 hours per week
- Courses that are 3 credits—students should be engaged at least 7 hours per week
- Courses that are 2 credits—students should be engaged at least 5 hours per week
- Courses that are 1 credit—students should be engaged at least 3 hours per week

For 8 week terms:

- Courses that are 4 credits—students should be engaged at least 17.5 hours per week
- Courses that are 3 credits—students should be engaged at least 14 hours per week
- Courses that are 2 credits—students should be engaged at least 9 hours per week
- Courses that are 1 credit—students should be engaged at least 4.5 hours per week

### **Example 1: 4 credit semester-long course meeting 3 times per week**

This is a four credit course that meets 3 days per week for 60 minutes. It is designed to have learning opportunities and activities totaling approximately 143 hours over the 15 weeks of the course (including finals week).

In class activities: (3 days x 60 minutes x 14 weeks + 2 hours for final class)	42 hours
Required Readings and Focus/Extension Exercises: (14 chapters readings x 3 hours each)	42 hours
Midterm take-home exam:	5 hours
Final paper and oral presentation	24 hours
Five reflection "papers" (5 x 5 hours each)	25 hours
Preparation for final activity	5 hours
Total	143 hours

### **Example 2: 4 credit semester-long course meeting 3 times per week for 60 minutes and once a week for a 3 hour lab**

This is a four credit course that meets 3 days per week for 60 minutes and 1 day per week for 3 hours. It is designed to have learning opportunities and activities totaling approximately 148 hours over the 15 weeks of the course (including finals week).

The designed activities may take each student a different amount of time to finish, however the average will be 148 hours. Further estimates include:

In class activities (3 hours x 14 weeks)	42 hours
In lab activities (3 hours x 14 weeks)	42 hours
Required readings (8 chapter readings x 3 hours each)	24 hours
Research paper (including searching and evaluating research)	30 hours
Lab assignments (10 x 1 hour each)	10 hours
Total	148 hours

### **Example 3: 4 credit semester-long course meeting twice a week**

This is a four-credit undergraduate course that meets face-to-face twice a week over the semester. It is designed to provide learning time totaling approximately 148 hours over the 15 weeks of the course (including finals week). This estimate is for the typical undergraduate student. Estimates of the time you will need for learning time follow:

In class activities: (90 min./class x 2 times/week x 14 weeks + 2 hours for final class)	44 hours
Required readings: (8 plays x 4 hrs each; 8 articles x 1 hr each)	40 hours
Essays: (research, draft, supporting materials, conference, and final revision)	40 hours
Forum postings on Scholar	14 hours
Preparation for performance assignment:	10 hours
Total	148 hours

#### **Example 4: 4 credit course taught completely online for 8 weeks**

This is a four credit undergraduate course that "meets" for chat on Tuesdays from 6:00 to 7:00 pm. It is designed to have learning opportunities and activities totaling approximately 140 hours over the 8 weeks of the course - 8 hours in "chat" and 131 hours outside of class. This estimate is for the typical undergraduate student. The designed activities may take one person longer to complete and another person may complete the activities in less time. We are all individuals. Here are some further estimates:

Synchronous chats (8 x 1 hour each): "in-class activity"	8 hours
Required readings (12 chapters x 3 hours each)	36 hours
Six weekly papers (6 x 6 hours each)	36 hours
Final paper:	32 hours
Asynchronous discussion board activities (7 x 4 hours each): (also considered an "in-class activity")	28 hours
Total	140 hours

#### **Example 5: 4 credit EWG course taught in a blended learning format over 8 weeks**

This is a four credit graduate course that meets weekly on the Ankeny Campus on Tuesdays from 5:30 to 9:30 pm. It is designed to have learning opportunities and activities totaling approximately 140 hours over the 8 weeks of the course - 32 hours in class and 108 hours outside of class. The designed activities may take one person longer to complete and another person may complete the activities in less time. We are all individuals. Here are some further estimates:

In-class activities	32 hours
Required readings and focus/extension exercises: (8 readings x 7 hours each)	56 hours
Midterm take-up exam	20 hours
Written paper and oral presentation	27 hours
Preparation for final activity	5 hours
Total	140 hours