

Effective Date: July 1, 2012

Retired:

Revised:

Approved by: WAYNE J. RILEY, M.D., MPH, MBA, MACP PRESIDENT AND CEO

Subject: INSTITUTIONAL CREDIT HOUR POLICY

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the credit hour policy is to provide a definition of a credit hour that is in alignment with the U.S. Department of Education guidelines.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Meharry Medical College operates on a semester system, with additional sessions offered between semesters, and during the summer. Standard courses offered during the semester in degree programs use contact hours that have been designed around the (Carnegie like) standard for a 3-unit class over a 15-18 week semester. This unit is known by the familiar term, "semester credit hour," and is the primary academic measure by which progress toward a degree is gauged at Meharry. It is recognized that such a unit measures only a part, albeit a major part, of a composite learning experience, based upon formally structured and informal interactions among faculty and students.

The Meharry Medical College follows the guidelines in compliance with the U.S. Department of Education's definition of credit hours as relates to credit hours for assigning credit to all courses taught in the Graduate and Professional Schools, including pre-clinical, clinical, laboratory, rotation, internship/externship, and elective coursework. The number of credits assigned to a course quantitatively reflects the modes of instruction and the amount of time spent in contact with students. 1 credit hour is worth 15-18 contact hours per course.

No degree credit is earned by a student for "D" or "F" grades received in graduate/professional level courses. Such courses must be repeated for a passing grade if they are to be counted as credit toward a graduate degree. However, grades of "D" or "F" are a permanent part of the record and are used in the calculation of the grade point average. In courses graded on a Pass/Fail basis, the receipt of a pass denotes credit.

The credit hour policy applies equally to courses of varying credits, duration, and modes of instruction. One unit of credit in lecture, seminar, and discussion work should approximate one hour of direct faculty instruction and a **minimum** of two hours

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of out-of-class student work per week through one 15-18 week semester. Alternately, if the time is wholly occupied with either the seminar, field, clinical or laboratory work, or internships/externships, service learning, directed study or intensive semester (e.g., summer courses offered in shorter form) a **minimum** of 45 hours of student work is expected for each unit of credit.

Note that there may be other and/or future modes of instruction to which this alternate satisfaction of the credit hour requirement may apply. Additionally, where classroom work is supplemented by systematic outside reading, experiment or research under the direction of the instructor, a reduction may be made in the actual field, clinical, laboratory, internship/externship or classroom time as seems appropriate to the instructor with the approval of the pertinent department and/or School curriculum committee.

DEFINITIONS:

Credit Hour: Specifically, and consistent in accordance and applicable with all U.S. Department of Education Program Integrity rules published October 29, 2010, Meharry Medical College defines a 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 or more 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 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, clerkships, internships/externships, practica, preclinical, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

PROCEDURE:

The School Curriculum Committees (with the assistance of the Office of the Registrar) determine the amount of coursework credit that will be assigned to each course based on the guidelines of the U.S. Department of Education.

The responsibility of the Curriculum Committees is to direct the curriculum for the education of students and oversee the curriculum development for programs. The Curriculum Committees determine the content, credit and sequencing of courses, and