

Below is the UC Berkeley Academic Senate regulation on credit hours. It is taken from the Courses of Instruction Handbook, Chapter 2:

<http://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/committees/coci/handbook2> which also has a section on the types of course formats at Berkeley (22 are listed):

2.3.1 Designation of Unit Value

Unit value for course offerings is governed by Academic Senate Regulation (SR) 760, which states in part:

The value of a course in units shall be reckoned at the rate of one unit for three hours work per week per term on the part of a student, or the equivalent. COCI defines work to include class contact time as well as time spent outside of class studying and doing research or homework. Thus, a three-unit class will be expected to require nine hours of total work per week on the part of the student.

SR 760 does not specify a relationship between unit value and class contact hours. Thus, COCI utilizes the following model: one unit equals 14 contact hours per term. Thus, the three-unit course should generally have 42 contact hours over the course of the term. Such a course might have a format of three hours of lecture per week for 14 weeks. The course would have nine hours of total work per week, three of which would be in-class lecture. Students would be expected to do six hours of additional out-of-class work.

Departments are responsible for submitting course approval requests that include a detailed description of how unit value is justified.

Lecture and Seminar Classes

One unit is assigned for one hour of lecture or seminar per week per semester. For courses whose format differs from the 14-week semester, one unit is assigned for 14 hours of lecture or seminar per term. Each hour of lecture or seminar is generally expected to require two additional hours of work (reading, writing, problem assignments, etc.). One additional unit can be assigned for courses with required discussion sections, when section meetings are at least one hour per week for a total of 14 hours (or more) per term.

Laboratory Courses or their Equivalent

One unit is assigned for each three hours of laboratory or its equivalent (workshop, studio, fieldwork, independent study, etc.) per week per term.

Additional Units

An additional unit of credit may be requested for courses that demand extensive reading, writing, or other academic work. All proposals for increased unit values beyond what are stipulated in Senate Regulations and COCI procedures must be specifically justified for each course affected. Specific justification for the additional unit implies that the student is expected to have to dedicate time beyond the normal three hours of work per unit mandated by SR 760. Thus, instructors should keep in mind that an additional unit represents, on average, 42 additional hours of work expected of a student during the semester. In justifying an additional unit, an instructor must explain how students will have to commit this additional time to the course (e.g., extra readings, extra assignments, or discussion sections). This requirement is applied to all new courses and all new requests for changes in unit value or course format.

Variable Units

Courses that are listed for variable units must specify how unit value will be assigned. Requirements should be clearly delineated for each unit value offered.

2.3.2 Maximum Allotment of Units

In general, undergraduate courses should not carry more than four units. Exceptions should be limited to cases where intensive study is appropriate and practicable, such as introductory language courses. Special justification must be presented for courses with more than four units of credit.

And here is information about web-based course credit hours, taken from the same Chapter 2:

2.5 Web-based and Online Courses (last updated 11/12/10)

Background

COCI working groups, in 2002 and 2004, considered the issue of online instruction, the broader issues involved, and how to reflect online instruction in instructional formats. The groups focused on hybrid courses, in which technologically mediated activities subsume online instruction and participation in computer-based activities in a lab setting as opposed to face-to-face interaction between instructors and students. In Spring 2006, COCI further considered the issues and took action to implement the recommendations of the working groups.

Criteria for Review

Face-to-face time vs. Web time

COCI established a threshold at which departments must justify substitutions of face-to-face contact with the instructor with web-based or technologically mediated work. Any course in which face-to-face contact with an instructor represents less than one-third of the total hours of required work per week must justify the substitutions by answering a list of questions, and the course should be designated as having a web-based instructional format. This standard is based on Senate Regulation 760, which states that the value of a course in units shall be reckoned at the rate of one unit for three hours work per week per term. This means that, essentially, for a three-unit course in which students and instructor do not meet in person for three hours per week (one-third of the total work hours required), and technologically mediated (web-based) activities substitute for this meeting time, special justification would be required.

Final Exams

If the instructor does not wish to conduct a final exam in accordance with SR 772, the instructor must follow procedures for final exams as outlined in section 2.1.3. Instructors will need to coordinate with the Office of Scheduling to offer a final exam if a regular classroom has not been assigned for the semester.

Supplementary Questions

Instructors proposing courses in which face-to-face contact is proposed for less than one-third of the total work hours must answer supplementary questions to assess whether the course will preserve student-instructor interaction and not decrease student accountability or otherwise negatively affect learning. In addition to replying to these questions, instructors should carefully consider how much time

they expect a typical student will need to work each week to complete requirements for the course, taking into account changed formats, in setting the required estimate of student work. SR 760 applies for web-based courses.

When submitting a course approval form for a new web-based course or a web-based version of an existing course, the instructor must submit answers to the following questions for COCI's review:

Overview questions:

What modes of instruction will be used, particularly those specific to technologically-mediated instruction (e.g., webcast lectures, moderated discussion lists, synchronous or asynchronous web-based discussion sections, email, chat rooms)?

What specific pedagogical advantages and disadvantages will the technologically-mediated format offer?

How will this way of delivering the course change modes of learning (e.g., auditory or tactile) and affect learning experiences? If this course has a corresponding face-to-face version, please compare the two and explain the differences.

Is specific technical or pedagogical expertise (on the part of the student or instructor) necessary for this course? If so, what? If using GSIs, are there needs or plans for specialized training to enable them to work successfully in an online environment to elicit/follow/stimulate discussion?

What specific technical support does the department have available for instructors and students? What plans are there for malfunction, disruption, or unavailability of technical support?

How many students are expected to take this course? If there is a face-to-face equivalent on campus, please indicate the semester(s) taught and typical enrollment(s) and whether the face-to-face version will continue to be taught after development of an online version.

Is there a specific problem or set of problems that online delivery is intended to address (e.g., increasing access, relieving impacted courses, reducing costs)? If so, please explain.

Will this course satisfy major/degree requirements? If so, are there face-to-face courses that meet the same requirements? Will both the face-to-face and online options be treated the same when determining if students have met these requirements? If not, please explain.

Have you considered how this course will relate to other courses, both online and face-to-face, that your department may offer, or that may be offered by other departments? For example, will this course serve as a prerequisite for other courses? Please explain.

Course Mechanics and Logistics Questions:

What is the nature of instructor involvement in the proposed alternative mode of instruction? What are the means by which the instructor will foster learning, and how will the instructor be available for consultation?

In the case of distance learning courses offered collaboratively between campuses, what are the specific responsibilities of instructors on this campus? How will coordination be maintained between campuses, and who will be responsible on this campus for consultation with students?

How will student progress be monitored? Describe graded activities mediated through technology and how materials will be handled to verify student identities and to ensure that students only receive credit for their own work.

What are the plans for evaluating student learning outcomes, both at the end of the term and as students move through subsequent courses in a sequence of courses or curricula?

How will course material that is archival in nature (e.g., recorded webcasts, voiceover slides) be updated for future offerings? Can it be easily moved to other platforms or adopted by other instructors?

COCI will be reviewing approved online courses after 4 years, consistent with the recommendations in the Berkeley Division's Final Report of the Online Graduate Degree Working Group (which can be found at http://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/recommendations-reports/final_report_online_graduate_degrees_working_group.pdf) and COCI's current practice of seeking input from the instructors of new online courses on their teaching experiences a practice which has been in place since COCI's first provisional approval of online courses in 2003. If you believe your proposed course would benefit from review before the 4-year mark, what is the alternative time-scale for review that you would prefer and the reasoning behind it?