## Direct Contact Hours and Academic Engagement

When completed, the Equivalency Chart should be added to your online/hybrid course syllabus.

According to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education’s Credit Hour Policy and the PA Department of Education’s Title 22, “a semester credit hour represents a unit of curricular material that normally can be taught in a minimum of 14 hours of classroom instruction, plus appropriate outside preparation or the equivalent as determined by the faculty” (PA Code, Title 22, § 31.21.b). Hence a 3-credit course should have 42 hours of classroom instruction, or for online/hybrid courses, 42 hours of direct contact. In an online or hybrid course, direct contact hours may include online activities that engage students during the weeks when the class does not meet in person. The amount of time that students are engaged in taking a final exam is NOT included in the 42 hours of direct contact, but quizzes during the term can be included. Since many online courses are accelerated, the 42 hours of direct instruction will be greater than the 3 hours needed for a 14-week course. Common course lengths:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Length of Course in Weeks** | **Direct Hours Per Week** | **Total Hours for 3 credit Course** |
| 14 | 3 | 42 |
| 8 | 5.25 | 42 |
| 7 | 6 | 42 |

New federal Title IV regulations, effective July 1, 2021, require instructors to engage in at least two forms of substantive interaction during each course. The substantive interactions with the student must occur on a predictable and scheduled basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount of content in the course. The regulations define substantive interaction as engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and also includes at least two of the following: (i) Providing direct instruction; (ii) Assessing or providing feedback on a student’s coursework; (iii) Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency; (iv) Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course; or (v) Other instructional activities approved by the institution’s or program’s accrediting agency.

The new regulations also require that an instructor monitor the students’ academic engagement and success. The instructor is responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interaction with the student when needed on the basis of such monitoring, or upon request by the student. Monitoring a student’s ‘‘academic engagement and success” may include: evaluating a student’s level of participation in synchronous class sessions; monitoring the student’s activity on course websites or materials; considering the quality of the student’s coursework or understanding; or other forms of monitoring the student’s engagement and success.

Fill out the chart below to provide an estimate of the direct contact hours for both in-person and online activities in your course. Add the completed chart to your syllabus. (You may delete activities that you are not using to save space.) For a full, detailed list of activities, see the extended [Equivalency Chart.](https://wp.lasalle.edu/idteam/wp-content/uploads/sites/28/2017/02/instructional-equivalencies-chart-151120.pdf)

Direct Contact Hours

| Activity | Contact Hours | Academic Engagement |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Live Lectures |  | Provide Direct Instruction |
| Asynchronous Lectures |  | Provide direct feedback to questions or problems within the lecture |
| Discussion Forums |  | Facilitate Group Discussion |
| Synchronous Meetings |  | Provide Information or Respond to Questions |
| Case Study/Field Study/Simulations |  | Assess and Provide Feedback |
| Lab Sessions (Live or Online) |  | Assess and Provide Feedback |
| Office Hours |  | Provide Information or Respond to Questions |
| Quizzes (Final Exams not included) |  | Assess and Provide Feedback |
| Student Presentations |  | Assess and Provide Feedback |
| Journals/Blogs |  | Assess and Provide Feedback |
| Online Resources/Computer-Based Training |  | Direction and Feedback |
| Group Projects/Peer Review |  | Assess and Provide Feedback |
| Review Instructor Feedback/Revise |  | Assess and Provide Feedback |
| Total |  |  |