

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

Credit Hour Assignments in the Revised Curriculum

Approved by: Committee on Undergraduate Medical Education (CUME)

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Revision Date:

Latest Review Date:

POLICY STATEMENT:

Pre-Clerkship Years

A consistent formula for determining the credit hours associated with each course in the revised curriculum is needed. “Course” in this instance refers to any entity for which a grade is assigned to a student’s transcript. Credit hours will reflect the average number of contact hours per week in a course. The total number of contact hours will be averaged over a 15-week semester (the standard undergraduate semester length), regardless of the duration of the course.

All class room/lab hours will be considered contact hours. In addition, online, pre-recorded lectures and any pre-reading assignments that replace previously live lectures (e.g., the pre-lab assignments in Structural Basis of Normal Body Function) will count as contact hours. Estimates of time spent on assigned readings that accompany, but do not replace, contact hours will not be considered toward credit hours nor will study time as both are implicitly part of undergraduate formulae.

In total for each semester, the number of credit hours should add up to 18-22 hours as this is the average contact time per week for students in the revised curriculum.

Clerkship Years

The revised curriculum will have little impact on the clerkship curriculum. Therefore, there is no need to alter the current 14 credit hours per core clerkship. The current 14 hours is derived from estimating that students spend on average 50 hours per week in the clinic or classroom. This totals 400 hours of contact time in an 8-week clerkship which would equate to a 27 credit hour course if spread over a 15-week semester. However, the roughly 2 hours of study time for every 1 hour of contact time (lecture) embedded in the undergraduate formula does not hold true for hours spent in the clinic. Therefore, the total credit hours are halved to yield 14 credit hours per 8-week core clerkship. A similar formula is applied to elective clerkships which vary in duration.