



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

School of Professional Studies

Title: Hybrid Course Policy

Responsible Unit: Instructional Design, Academic Affairs

Approval by: Academic Excellence Committee, Dean's Council

Effective Date: June 15, 2018

Introduction

The Office of Instructional Design and the Office of Academic Affairs are responsible for ensuring that all courses in the School of Professional Studies comply with the regulatory requirements of the federal and New York State governments and with the accreditation requirements of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education as they relate to ensuring that all courses carry an appropriate number of points of academic credit. Additionally, this policy specifies an acceptable and consistent method for assigning credit hours to hybrid courses.

Reason(s) for the Policy

To ensure consistency of practice regarding the number of hours hybrid courses allocate to face-to-face and online meeting time for a given course in the School of Professional Studies.

Policy

Hybrid courses will meet face-to-face for a maximum of 14-18 hours. This will be supplemented by 8-11 hours of online, synchronous study (e.g. Adobe Connect). Further, every effort should be made to maintain a weekly schedule—either face-to-face or online—to avoid confusion and complicated schedules. A total of 28 hours must be instructor-directed (either face-to-face, online synchronous, or online asynchronous). In other words, if there are 14 hours of face-to-face instruction and 8 hours of online, synchronous discussion, another 6 hours must be accounted for that are instructor-directed, asynchronous activity. If there are 18 hours of face-to-face instruction and 10 hours of online, synchronous instruction, there is no requirement for additional, instructor-directed activity. Instructors are not prohibited from adding additional instructor-directed activity. Instructor-directed activity includes:

- Video lecture
- Moderated discussion forum
- Detailed assignment feedback

Not included as instructor-directed activity include:

- Non-facilitated discussion
- Group projects
- Reading
- Work on individual assignments

There must be a total of 105 hours in the course (across all directed and non-directed activities).

Responsibilities

Instructional Designers are responsible for adhering to the above stated policy regarding the number of hours hybrid courses allocate to face-to-face and online meeting time for a given course in the School of Professional Studies when designing courses.

Faculty are responsible for adhering to the above stated policy regarding the number of hours hybrid courses allocate to face-to-face and online meeting time for a given course in the School of Professional Studies when teaching courses.

Program Directors are responsible for overseeing faculty, TA, and program representatives to ensure consistent adherence to the above stated policy regarding the number of hours hybrid courses allocate to face-to-face and online meeting time for a given course in the School of Professional Studies when administering courses.

Definitions

- 1. Credit Hour:** The U.S. Department of Education defines “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 of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, 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, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.” The U.S. Department of Education establishes the credit hour as the basis for measuring an 1 U.S. Department of Education Office of Post-Secondary Education, “Guidance to Institutions and Accrediting Agencies Regarding a Credit Hour as Defined in the Final Regulations Published on October 29, 2010.” institution’s eligibility for federal funding. The Carnegie unit, represented in point (1) above, has served as the traditional unit of measure, but the Department also recognizes that institutions are developing other measures of educational content and credit equivalency. The purpose of the credit hour policy is to ensure that credit hour measures are reasonably equivalent regardless of how institutions award credit hours to courses and programs in various modes of instruction and teaching and learning formats.
- 2. Hybrid Course:** A course format which blends traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning instruction and activities.

Exclusions and Special Situations

Courses already designed

Primary Guidance to Which This Policy Responds

Columbia University, Office of the Provost, *Policy on Credit Hours*

<http://www.college.columbia.edu/coursepoints>

Middle States Commission in Higher Education, Credit Hour Policy
<http://www.msche.org/documents/CreditHourPolicyRev112012.pdf>

New York State Education Department, Office of College and University Evaluation,
Determining Time on Task in Online Education
<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/ocue/ded/policies.html>

Cross References to Related Policies

Columbia University, Guidance on Course Points

Web Address

<http://www.college.columbia.edu/coursepoints>