



# Operating Protocol & Procedure

## Details:

Number: 620

Title: Credit to Contact Hours for Online and Hybrid Courses

Category: Instruction

Office of Primary Responsibility: Office of the Vice President of Academic Support

Approval Date: 10/24/16

Effective Date: 10/24/16

Revised: 12/9/24

Reviewed: December 2024

## Purpose:

To establish the guidelines for both instructor-led and independent activities to meet HLC guidelines for credit-to-contact hours for online and hybrid courses (see HLC Federal Compliance Program Packet)

## Applicability:

All faculty and instructors

## Definitions:

Instructor-led activities: Direct faculty instruction hours (1:1)

Independent learning activities: Out-of-class student work hours (2:1)

Credit hours: A credit hour represents the time involved in achieving the learning outcomes of a course. The time represents a minimum of one hour (or 50 minutes) of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks for one semester hour of credit. For example:

Traditional lecture class: 3 contact hours/week + 6 student prep hours/week=9 clock hours x 15 weeks  
= 135 clock hours = 3 credits. 45 contact hours + 90 student prep (independent learning) hours = 135  
hours = 3 credits.

Carnegie Unit: An hour of instruction is equal to 50 minutes. One semester credit hour is awarded for fifteen sessions of 50-minutes duration of classroom or instructor-led instruction and two hours of outside preparation (independent learning by the student.)

## References:

[HLC Federal Compliance Program Packet](#)

**Attachments:**

[CCCOOnline Seat Time Equivalency Estimates](#)

[PCC Credit to Contact Guidelines](#)

[Required Seat Time Per Credit Hour Chart](#)

[PCC Credit Hour Required Calculator](#)

[Online Course Map](#)

**Operating Protocol:**

All online and hybrid courses offered through Pueblo Community College must be developed and delivered with fidelity to meet credit-to-contact hour guidelines.

**Procedure:**

Credit hour to contact time (credit-to-contact) must be analyzed for current and future online and hybrid courses.

All new online and hybrid courses must have the credit-to-contact hours calculated at the time the course is being developed. In conjunction with the OP-P 612 (Online Course Development), a copy of the *PCC Credit Hours Required* worksheet should be submitted with the *Request for New Online Course* form to the myPCC eLearning Office for final approval.

To calculate the credit-to-contact hours, utilize the [Required Seat Time per Credit Hours Chart](#) and the [PCC Credit Hours Requirement Calculator](#) sheet to analyze the instructor-led and independent learning activities for each course. Calculate the total hours/difference, adjust as needed, and submit to the myPCC eLearning Office along with the *Request for New Online Course* form.

All online and hybrid courses must remain in compliance with the federal requirements for credit-to-contact hours. It is incumbent upon all faculty/instructors teaching online or hybrid courses to review and ensure that the course meets the above requirements on an annual basis.

After August 1, 2017, any online or hybrid courses found to be non-compliant with this operating protocol will not be offered until requirements are met.