

## Clock-to-Credit-Hour Conversion Requirements

### General

- Are in § 668.8(k) and (l), October 29, 2010 program integrity final regulations, p. 66949-66950 (preamble: pp. 66854-66857)
- Is an exception to the credit-hour definition that applies for purposes of the title IV, HEA programs
- Modified regulations—
  - The requirements for when an institution must use clock hours for undergraduate programs, and
  - The standards for clock-to-credit-hour conversions

### Clock Hour Only: not eligible for conversion - §668.8(k)(2)

- Section 668.8(k)(2) applies to degree and nondegree programs.
- The program is required to be measured in clock hours for Federal or State approval except if required for only a limited component of the program.
- Completing clock hours is a requirement for licensure to practice an occupation except if required for a limited component of the program.
- The credit hours awarded are not in compliance with the definition of a credit hour.
- The institution does not provide the clock hours that are the basis for credit hours and does not require attendance in those hours in the case of a program that might otherwise qualify to do conversion to credit hours.

### No Conversion required - §668.8(k)(1)

- Unless §668.8(k)(2) applies, an undergraduate program may use credit hours as defined in §600.2 without applying the conversion formula if—

- a) The program is at least two academic years in length and provides an associate degree, a bachelor's degree, a professional degree, or an equivalent degree as determined by the Secretary, or
- b) The program is a nondegree program with—
  - Each course in the program being fully acceptable toward a degree program at the institution; and
  - The institution able to demonstrate that students enroll in, and graduate from, that degree program.
- A program not meeting a) or b) must use the conversion formula or use clock hours.

New Conversion Ratios - §668.8(1)(1)

- One semester or trimester credit hour is equal to at least 37.5 clock hours.
- One quarter credit hour is equal to at least 25 clock hours.

New Conversion Ratios Exception - §668.8(1)(2)

- Is an exception to new ratios for programs that demonstrate that the credit hours meet new definition and there are no deficiencies identified by accreditor, or if applicable State approving agency
- Must base evaluation on individual coursework components of a program, e.g., classroom study versus practica or labs with little outside study
- Regardless, must meet these minimums:
  - One semester or trimester credit hour is equal to at least 30 clock hours.
  - One quarter credit hour is equal to at least 20 clock hours.

Conversion Case Study (to semester hours)

- A program with 720 clock hours consists of—
  - 5 classroom courses with 120 clock hours each, and
  - A 120 clock-hour externship with no out-of-class student work.
- The institution determines that for—
  - The first 3 classroom courses, a student generally is required to perform 40 hours of out-of-class work for each course, and
  - The last 2 classroom courses have 8 hours of out-of-class work for each course.
- Two options
  - Default option: convert only based on clock hours and ignore any out-of-class work
  - Full formula option: take into account both clock hours and out-of-class work to determine the maximum allowable credit hours
  - Four possible outcomes depending on institutional policy for method and rounding: 19.2 or 18 using Default option and 22.026 or 21 using Full Formula option
- Default option: use the default 37.5 clock hours per semester hour, ignoring the out-of-class work [conversion must be course by course]
 

$120 / 37.5 = 3.2$  semester hours per course (3, always round down course-by-course)

  - Converted program =  $3.2 * 6 = 19.2$  semester hours (or  $3 * 6 = 18$  semester hours, if rounding)
- Full formula option
 

Illustrates:

  - Must evaluate on individual coursework components of a program
  - Total clock hours and out-of-class student work is irrelevant
  - Must meet limitation for the minimum number of clock hours per credit hour in addition to out-of-class work
  - Excess out-of-class student work per credit hour does not carry over between courses or educational activities in a program
  - Use exact calculation including any fractions of credit hours or round down any fraction, including a fraction equal to or greater than  $\frac{1}{2}$
  - Rounding on individual course or educational activity, not on the total

## Full formula option

	In-class clock hours		Allowable out- of-class prep hours	Total clock and prep hours	Semester hours	Semester hours (rounded)	Notes
Course #1 (40 hours of actual out-of-class student work)	120	+	$7.5 * 4 = 30$	150	4	4	(A), (C)
Course #2 (40 hours of actual out-of-class student work)	120	+	$7.5 * 4 = 30$	150	4	4	(A), (C)
Course #3 (40 hours of actual out-of-class student work)	120	+	$7.5 * 4 = 30$	150	4	4	(A), (C)
Course #4 (8 hours of actual out-of-class student work)	120	+	8	128	3.413	3	(B), (D)
Course #5 (8 hours of actual out-of-class student work)	120	+	8	128	3.413	3	(B), (D)
Externship (no out-of-class student work)	120	+	0	120	3.2	3	(E)
Total clock hours and out-of-class student work (amount not relevant)				826			
<b>Total semester hours</b> if no rounding					<b>22.026</b>		
<b>Total semester hours</b> if rounding (must round down any fractions to ensure no overawards)						<b>21</b>	

**NOTES:**

**Limitation:** the rules do not allow more than 7.5 hours of out-of-class prep for every 30 hours in class

- (A) 120 in-class hours divided by 30 hours = 4      There are 10 hours of out-of-class prep per 30 clock hours ( $40/4 = 10$ ), but cannot have more than 7.5 ( $4 * 7.5 = 30$ )
- (B) 120 in-class hours divided by 30 hours = 4      There are 7.5 or fewer hours of out-of-class prep per 30 clock hours ( $8/4 = 2$ ), so use actual hours of out-of-class prep (8)

**Semester hours per course**

- (C) 150 total clock and prep hours divided by 37.5 = 4
- (D) 128 total clock and prep hours divided by 37.5 = 3.413
- (E) 120 total clock hours divided by 37.5 = 3.2