

Elon University
Definition of the Credit Hour

A. The Credit Hour

1. “Credit Hour” is the unit by which Elon measures its course work regardless of format or mode of delivery, and regardless of the course level. Students, institutions, employers, and others rely on the common currency of academic credit to support a wide range of activities, including the transfer of students from one institution to another and for the awarding financial aid.
2. The number of credit hours assigned to a course quantitatively reflects the outcomes expected, the mode of instruction, the amount of time spent in class (including the final examination), and the amount of outside preparatory work expected for the class.
3. Academic credit has provided the basis for measuring the amount of learning time expected of a typical student enrolled not only in traditional classroom settings, but also in laboratories, studios, internships and other experiential learning, as well as in study abroad and online education.
4. Elon follows the definition of a credit hour outlined in federal regulations and supported by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges as:

“Not less than one hour [most frequently implemented as 50 minutes] of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester hour of credit, or at least an equivalent amount of work as required outlined above for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practicum, studio work, study abroad, study-away, hybrid- technology courses, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.”
5. Students taking an Elon course online are required to meet the same standards as those who are taking sections of the course in the classroom setting.
6. During fall and spring terms, the typical 4-credit hour Elon undergraduate class meets either three times a week for 70 minutes (210 minutes/week or 52.5 minutes per credit hour) or twice a week for 100 minutes (200 minutes/week or 50 minutes per credit hour) for 13- 14 weeks (not including final exams). In addition to these in-class commitments and the reading and course preparation, Elon students are often expected to participate in activities outside of class such as service learning, collaborative work, internships, practicum, studio work, and cultural programming. Elon requires a minimum of 132 hours of course work for completion of a bachelor degree.
7. Graduate programs at Elon vary with respect to calendar, credit hours associated with course work and the number of credit hours required for degree completion. Masters

programs adhere to at least 30 semester hours for degree completion with three credit hour courses. Elon's professional programs in Physical Therapy and Physician Assistant Studies are on a module system with assignment of credit hours generally based on the formula of 1 credit hour = 750 minutes of instructional time plus 1500 minutes outside of class work. Laboratories are 1 sh = 1440 minutes of instructional time with out of lab time generally estimated at 840 minutes per credit hour. The Law School uses a trimester calendar and courses vary from 1-5 credit hour courses. The curriculum complies with ABA Standard 310 in terms of defining the credit hour in a manner consistent with FR 4.9. The Law School maintains a policy for ongoing compliance that addresses the credit hour.

8. The following chart explains Elon's implementation of the credit hour in minutes and hours based on 1 credit hour.

**Implementation of Credit Hour at Elon University
(Numbers reflect minimum time allotments)**

	Instructional Type	In-Class Time per week plus exam	Out-of-Class Course Preparation Time per week plus exam study	TOTAL Clock Hours per Credit Hour	Additional Experiential Activity Time at Elon
Federal 1 credit-hour definition		50 min x 15 weeks= 750 minutes (12.5 hours)	100 min x 15 weeks= 1,500 minutes (25 hours)	150 min x 15 weeks= 2,250 minutes (37.5 hours)	
	<u>Lecture/Seminar/Discussion</u>	<i>52.5 minutes x 13.5 weeks = 708.5 minutes, plus 60 minutes for final exam =</i> 768.5 minutes (12.8 hours)	<i>105 minutes x 13.5 weeks = 1,417.5 minutes Plus 120 minutes for exam study =</i> 1,537.5 minutes (25.62 hours)	2306 minutes (38.4 hours)	Elon classes may include additional time for experiential learning activities out of class such as group project work, service learning, research etc.
	Classes meeting M-W-F	_____	_____	_____	
	Classes meeting T-Th	<i>50 minutes x 13.5 weeks = 675 minutes plus 60 minutes for final exam =</i> 735 minutes (12.25 hours)	<i>100 minutes/wk x 13.5 = 1,350 minutes Plus 120 minutes for exam study =</i> 1,470 minutes (24.5 hours)	2,205 minutes (36.75 hours)	

Elon 1 credit-hour definition		120 minutes per week x 12 weeks = 1440 minutes (24 hours)	70 minutes per week* x 12 weeks = 840 minutes (14 hours) (*includes time spent on out of class project)	2280 minutes (38 hours)	
	<u>Laboratory Classes</u>	100 minutes per week x 10 weeks = 1000 minutes (16 hours 40 min)	150 minutes per week* x 10 weeks = 1500 minutes (25 hours)(*includes time spent on out of class project)	2500 minutes (41 hours 40 min)	
		180 minutes per week x 12 weeks = 2160 minutes (36 hours)	60 minutes per week x 12 weeks = 720 minutes (12 hours)	2880 minutes (48 hours)	
	<u>Performance/Recital/</u>	(100-200			
	<u>Ensemble</u>	range) 100 minutes per week x 13.5 weeks= 1,350 minutes (22.5 hours)	200 minutes per week x 13.5 weeks= 2,700 minutes (45 hours)	4050 minutes (67.5 hours)	
	<u>Internship</u>	40-80 hours <i>(on-site)</i>	0-40 hours	40-120 hours	
	<u>Independent Study</u>		Min. 3 hrs/week	2430 Minutes (40.5 Hours)	
	<u>Study Abroad</u> Winter Term Semester <u>Study-Away</u> <u>Online Courses</u>	All Elon University classes, regardless of mode or location of delivery, must be of reasonable length and include both content and contact sufficient to maintain high academic quality and standards commensurate with credit hours awarded for a traditional four-semester hour lecture class. The basis for such certification of learning is a valid, credible assessment system which reliably determines whether a student possesses clearly identified, standards-based knowledge, skills, and abilities.			
	<u>Clinical</u> (Health Sciences Only)	80 hours <i>(on-site)</i>		80 hours <i>(on-site)</i>	

9. Proposals for exceptions to the credit hour regulations above must be approved through the appropriate curriculum process and will ultimately require review and approval by the University Curriculum Committee. Any request should include an explanation of the type of variance to be applied and the expected benefit. The UCC examines expectations for learning and considers relevant circumstances before deciding whether to approve a variance. For the Law School, the Curriculum Committee, as part of the curricular approval process, shall review proposals for compliance with the ABA Standard 310.

B. Course levels

1. Undergraduate Courses

Elon undergraduates may not enroll in graduate courses, and Elon graduate students may not receive graduate credit for taking undergraduate courses (although very occasionally graduate students may take undergraduate courses to complete prerequisites, for which they receive undergraduate credit). Elon has a policy that allows undergraduates, by permission, to enroll in select graduate courses at the 500 level.

100-level – Introductory courses. Does not assume previous knowledge

200-level – Introductory courses. May assume some familiarity with the subject and may have specific prerequisites in disciplines where completion of introductory courses is essential.

300-level- Contain more specialized course content and presume a more sophisticated learner. In the Elon Core Curriculum (general studies program), 300/400-level capstone interdisciplinary seminars can only be taken by students with at least junior standing.

400-level - generally the most complex in presentation of knowledge and expectation for student performance. Courses at this level include advanced disciplinary courses, independent studies, senior seminars, and undergraduate research.

2. Graduate Courses

500-level – Introductory-level graduate and professional courses (including those with co-enrolled undergraduates)

600-level – First-year graduate and professional courses

700-level – Second-year graduate and professional courses

800-level – Advanced level doctoral courses

900-level – Advanced level doctoral courses