

Lafayette College: Policy, Practice, and Implementation Related to the Credit Hour Provisions in the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008

**The Policy**

Lafayette College uses a course unit system intended to emphasize the mastery of subject matter, in contrast to the semester credit hour system, which measures achievement in terms of class time. A unit of instruction includes a combination of lecture, discussion, recitation, group and individual projects, and studio/laboratory work. Lafayette courses vary in the number of scheduled meeting hours. Courses scheduled for three hours of classroom/other instruction per week also include additional instructional activity, e.g. discussion sessions, workshops, attendance at lectures and performances, service learning, final examinations, fieldwork, etc.

**The Practice:**

**The federal course credit rule requires a total of 180 hours (12 hours/week) of student work over an approximately 15-week semester for a full unit course.** A course meets the College's definition of a course credit unit if it meets one of the following:

Over the semester, course activities will include:

- At least 56 hours of classroom activities and/or labs (i.e. 4 hours/week for 14 weeks) **AND**
- At least 124 additional hours of course work (approximately 8 hours/week) **IN OR OUTSIDE** of regular class meetings, including: preparation for classes in the form of assigned reading and writing; and/or problem solving homework exercises; and/or conducting research; and/or additional academic activities listed below\*.

**-OR-**

Over the semester, course activities will include:

- At least 42 hours of classroom activities and/or labs (i.e. 3 hours/week for 14 weeks), **AND**
- At least 14 hours of additional classroom activities or academic activities such as those listed below\*, **AND**
- At least 124 additional hours of course work (approximately 8 hours/week) **IN OR OUTSIDE** of regular class meetings, including: preparation for classes in the form of assigned reading and writing; and/or problem solving homework exercises; and/or conducting research; and/or additional academic activities listed below\*.

**-OR-**

(for Independent Studies, Honors Projects, Internships)

Over the semester, the successful student will complete at least 180 hours of course work, the nature of which will be determined by the student and the instructor/supervisor. Such work will include a combination of the following:

- Meeting with the instructor (including labs, and/or studios, and/or lectures, and/or conferences, and/or rehearsals, and/or coaching sessions etc.);
- Thesis reviews, presentations and defenses;

- Agreed upon reading and writing;
- Problem solving homework exercises;
- Conducting research;
- Editing and revision of written work;
- Rehearsals, and/or performances;
- Field trips;
- Attending required performances or talks.

N.B. Half unit courses will complete 90 hours of student work and quarter unit courses will complete 45 hours of student work.

**\*Examples of Additional Academic Activities:**

1. service learning
2. field work
3. attendance at concerts, dramatic performances, poetry readings, lectures
4. viewing of films outside of class time
5. attendance at departmental colloquia
6. supervised problem solving sessions, e.g., supplemental instruction meetings
7. weekly group tutoring sessions
8. writing conferences with faculty or writing assistant
9. participation in outside of class experiments
10. conducting science labs or experiments outside of class
11. group project meetings and/or group work outside of class
12. attendance at departmental student research presentations
13. participation in local or regional conferences
14. participation in community projects
15. field trips
16. organizing campus events as part of course requirements
17. library instruction outside of class
18. participation in electronic discussion boards, chat rooms, blogs, wikis
19. participation and instruction in the Language Learning Center outside of class time
20. participation in weekly conversation sessions in foreign languages outside of class time
21. individual meetings with the instructor

**The Implementation**

Each existing syllabus and each syllabus submitted to CEP for approval shall be in compliance with this policy and include the following brief note:

The student work in this course is in full compliance with the federal definition of a four [*two or one as appropriate for half and quarter unit courses*] credit hour course. Please see the Registrar's Office web site (<http://registrar.lafayette.edu/additional-resources/cep-course-proposal/>) for the full policy and practice statement.