

Creighton University School of Law Credit Hour Policy

I. Traditional Courses

Creighton University School of Law follows the ABA definition of a “credit hour” which “is an amount of work that reasonably approximates: (1) not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and two hours of out-of-class student work per week for fifteen weeks, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as required in subparagraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including simulation, field placement, clinical, co-curricular, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.” Interpretation 310-1 states that 50 minutes suffices for an hour of classroom instruction, but an “hour” for out-of-class student work is 60 minutes. The Interpretation also includes a final examination week in the 15-week calculation. Creighton typically has classes scheduled over a 15 week period, of which 13 weeks are regularly scheduled classes, and the final two weeks consist of final examinations. In order to meet the standard for classroom instruction, Creighton requires a minimum of 700 minutes of classroom instruction per credit hour, and 60 minutes of exam time per credit hour. For four-credit courses, Creighton requires a minimum of 715 minutes of classroom instruction per credit hour, and 180 minutes of total exam time. In addition, students should expect out-of-class work (assignments, case-briefs, outlining, practice exams, other exam preparation, etc.) to be at least two hours per week per credit hour over the course of the semester. Therefore, for every 50 minutes of class students should expect at least two hours of out-of-class work. For a standard three-credit class that meets for approximately 165 minutes per week, students should expect to spend approximately 400 minutes per week working outside of class. These standards are minimums, and the Creighton faculty strongly encourages students to spend more time outside of class studying and preparing in order to achieve mastery of the material.

For traditional courses, requiring students to read and prepare daily assignments of 12-15 pages (per 75-85 minute class session) will presumptively satisfy the out-of-class work requirement. The reading assignments may be shorter and still presumptively satisfy the out-of-class work requirement if they include other components such as problem sets, written exercises, projects, etc. For skills-based courses or courses taught in a non-traditional manner, instructors shall ensure the requisite amount of out-of-class work for compliance with Standard 310(b)(1). Instructors may demonstrate that they have satisfied this requirement through written assignments, regularly scheduled practices, reading assignments, blog postings, participation in online forums, etc.

Each course Blueline page includes the following credit-hour statement:

The American Bar Association standards for accrediting law schools contain a formula for calculating the amount of work that constitutes one credit hour. According to ABA Standard 310(b)(1), “a “credit hour” is an amount of work that reasonably approximates: (1) not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and two hours of out-of-class student work per week for fifteen weeks, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time.” Under this standard, for every 50 minutes of time spent in class you should expect to do, on average, at least two hours of out-of-class work. For more information, please refer to the full policy available at <https://law.creighton.edu/current-students/academics/schedules>.

II. Journals, Moot Court, and Independent Studies

For students earning credit through participation on journals, moot court, independent studies and other similar out-of-class experiences, they shall be required to do an amount of work that reasonably approximates the amount of work required for in-class credit. For these non-classroom credits, Creighton requires a minimum of 42.5 hours (2,550 minutes) of work per credit hour awarded.

A. Journals, Moot Court, and Competition Teams

Students on journals, moot court, and competition teams must certify that they have done work that meets the minimum hours required, and submit the certification to the faculty supervisor in the final week of the semester. The certification shall include the student's name, NetID, the activity (CICLJ, Law Review, Moot Court, Trial Team, etc.), an attestation to the hours spent, and a brief description of the activity (e.g., Law Review, Moot Court, Trial Team, etc.). Creighton reserves the right to audit these certifications. In the event of an audit, the student will be required to demonstrate that he/she has satisfied the time requirement through time logs more specifically demonstrating the activity and amount of time spent on each (e.g., spading articles, preparing briefs, practicing oral arguments, etc.).

B. Independent Study/Directed Research

For students participating in Independent Study opportunities, the student and faculty member shall agree on a course of research and drafting. For every independent study, the student shall: (1) craft a project proposal to be approved by a faculty supervisor; (2) draft a summary of the project (no more than one page) articulating the legal issue(s) to be discussed and stating the student's thesis; (3) elect to be graded pass/fail or A-F and choose the number of credits; (4) provide a detailed outline (3-5 pages) to the faculty supervisor; (5) provide a rough draft that is largely complete; (6) incorporate the faculty supervisor's comments and feedback into the draft of the paper; (7) submit the final paper after consulting with the faculty supervisor on the previous feedback received and how it was incorporated. Students should anticipate the following minimum page requirements (with footnotes) for their independent study projects: one credit – at least 20 pages; two credits – at least 30 pages; three credits at least 40 pages. The projects should be double-spaced (footnotes single-spaced), in Times New Roman font size 12 (footnotes in font size 10), with one inch margins.

III. Clinics and Externships

Students participating in clinic and externship opportunities must document the amount of time they work on-site. Students in the clinic and externship program are required to work at least 150 hours over the course of the semester for the out-of-classroom component, and one hour a week, weekly, for the classroom component. In addition, for the externship, students are required to record hours, keep a journal of reflection about the externship, meet with the instructor, and present to the class on the externship experience at the end of the semester. In the clinic, students are required to work at least 210 hours over the course of the semester for the out-of-classroom component, and an average of two hours a week, weekly for the classroom component. The classroom component includes reading and written assignments.