Credit Hour Equivalence in Online Courses

**Federal Credit Hour Definition:** A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally-established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than: (1) one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other activities as established by an institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading toward the award of credit hours.

34CFR 600.2 (1/1/2010)

**Global Campus Syllabus statement:**

**Credit Hour Equivalent**

Academic credit is a measure of the total minimum time commitment required of a typical student in a specific course. For the WSU semester system, one semester credit is assigned for a minimum of 45 hours of student effort. See Academic regulation 27.

Students should expect to spend a minimum of **9 hours per week for each online 3-credit course** engaged in the following types of activities: reading, listening to/viewing media, discussion conversation in the LMS or other academic technology, conducting research, completing assignments and reviewing instructor feedback, studying for and completing assessments, etc.
Instructors are encouraged to spell out expectations on the syllabi as in the example below:

**Course Expectation:** Academic credit is a measure of the time commitment required of a typical student in a specific course. For the WSU semester system one semester credit is assigned for a minimum of 45 hours. The anticipated time commitment for this course is 3 hours of work per week for each credit hour (a minimum of 9 hours per week).

**Students can expect your weekly time commitment to be:**
- Class time (lecture, discussion, activities) ......................................................... 3 hours/week
- Assessment/Quiz completion ........................................................................... 0.5 hours/week
- Prep for assessment/study guide ...................................................................... 2 hours/week
- Research/write papers ....................................................................................... 1.5 hours/week
- Reading class materials .................................................................................... 2 hours/week
- Total hours .......................................................................................................... 9 hours/week

It is one way to approach the topic. I often think about the physics students (like my son) who might spend 3 hours in lab, and at least 3 more hours writing the lab report.

*From Dr. Deborah Handy, Human Development 101*