

Credit Hour Policy and Academic Rigor (Graduate)

At Soka University of America, the “credit hour” is defined as “the 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 fourteen weeks for one semester hour of credit for didactic instruction, 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 academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

The Graduate School offers semester-based credit courses in 15-week-semester and 3-week-block sessions. Three-credit lecture (didactic) courses require a minimum of 45 class contact hours. For every hour of classroom instruction each week, there is a minimum of two hours of student work.

For example, a semester-long class is three hours long and offered for 15 weeks (45 class contact hours for 3 units), with the expectation of 6 hours of outside work and preparation.

The University will review periodically the application of its policy on credit hour across the degree programs to assure that credit hour assignments are accurate, reliable, appropriate to degree level, and that they conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education through new course development, course review and revision, and program review.

While the commitment of time relative to award of academic credit is standard for the semester credit, the distinction between undergraduate and graduate level curricula and outcomes is represented within the context of the course outline/syllabi, which include course description, expectations for outcomes, and the rigor indicative of the level at which the course and instruction is provided.