

# CREDIT LOAD

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The full-time course load for a graduate student is 9 hours. A graduate student who wishes to overload (exceed 12 credit hours) must obtain the approval of the department chair and Dean of the Graduate School. In no case shall overloads exceed 16 graduate hours.

## Credit Hour Definition

Section 3.4.1 of the University System of Georgia Policy Manual – often referred to as the “750 minute policy” which states: “All USG institutions shall be on the semester system (BOR Minutes, December, 1995). The academic year shall consist of two (2) regular semesters, each not to be less than fifteen (15) calendar weeks in length, excluding registration. A minimum of 750 minutes of instruction is required for each semester credit hour.”

ASU expands this definition by stipulating not only the number of hours of instruction, but also by stipulating the number of hours (or equivalent) that students are required to devote to each course outside of class. By so doing, the University policy (below) explicitly aligns with both SACSCOC and federal policies on the awarding of credit hours:

For each credit hour, a student is to be engaged for 50-minutes of instruction time per week (or the equivalence of 750 minutes) over the entire semester of approximately 15 weeks through time in the classroom or direct faculty instruction, or on assignments, discussions, and/or examinations, excluding the final, to meet the required learning outcomes and two hours of student work outside of class each week with course activities, as reflected in the course syllabus. The credit hour definition for courses or portions of a course designated for learning activities that involve experiences or take place outside of the classroom varies according to the course. Students in these courses are expected to perform these out-of-class activities including work-place observation, shadowing, technical training, supervised teaching, etc., for a specified period of time—number of weeks, days during the week, and hours per day. The ratio of credit hour to contact time will vary with the program involved, but are designated in the course syllabus (the hours for class and hours for lab/clinical/other). Academic credits assigned to these courses align with each program's accreditation standards and are determined by the number of out-of-class contact (work) hours the student is required to complete. The definition for a credit hour is the same for face to face or online courses.