Federal Compliance Forms

# Overview

There are four forms that WSCUC uses to address institutional compliance with some of the federal regulations affecting institutions and accrediting agencies:

1. Credit Hour and Program Length Review Form
2. Marketing and Recruitment Review Form
3. Student Complaints Form
4. Transfer Credit Policy Form

During the Accreditation Visit, teams complete these four forms and add them as an appendix to the Team Report. Teams are not required to include a narrative about any of the matters in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings, Commendations, and Recommendations section of the team report.

# 1 - Credit Hour and Program Length Review Form

Under federal regulations, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s credit hour policy and processes as well as the lengths of its programs.

## Credit Hour - §602.24(f)

The accrediting agency, as part of its review of an institution for renewal of accreditation, must conduct an effective review and evaluation of the reliability and accuracy of the institution's assignment of credit hours.

1. The accrediting agency meets this requirement if-
2. It reviews the institution's-
3. Policies and procedures for determining the credit hours, as defined in 34 CFR 600.2, that the institution awards for courses and programs; and
4. The application of the institution's policies and procedures to its programs and coursework; and
5. Makes a reasonable determination of whether the institution's assignment of credit hours conforms to commonly accepted practice in higher education.

**Credit hour** is defined by the Department of Education as follows:

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

1. 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 10 to 12 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.a. 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.
2. Permits an institution, in determining the amount of work associated with a credit hour, to take into account a variety of delivery methods, measurements of student work, academic calendars, disciplines and degree levels. Institutions have the flexibility to award a greater number of credits for courses that they can show require more student work.

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission’s Credit Hour Policy.

## Program Length - §602.16(a)(1)(viii)

Program length may be seen as one of several measures of quality and as a proxy measure for scope of the objectives of degrees or credentials offered. Traditionally offered degree programs are generally approximately 120 semester credit hours for a bachelor’s degree, and 30 semester credit hours for a master's degree; there is greater variation at the doctoral level depending on the type of program. For programs offered in non-traditional formats, for which program length is not a relevant and/or reliable quality measure, reviewers should ensure that available information clearly defines desired program outcomes and graduation requirements, that institutions are ensuring that program outcomes are achieved, and that there is a reasonable correlation between the scope of these outcomes and requirements and those typically found in traditionally offered degrees or programs tied to program length.

Revised, May 2023

# Credit Hour and Program Length Review Form

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| **Material**  **Reviewed** | **Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)** |
| Policy on credit hour | Is this policy easily accessible? r YES r NO |
| Where is the policy located? |
| Comments: |
| Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour | Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? r YES r NO |
| Does the institution adhere to this procedure? r YES r NO |
| Comments: |
| Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet | Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours?  r YES r NO |
| Comments: |
| Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses  *Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.* | How many syllabi were reviewed? |
| What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? |
| What degree level(s)? |
| What discipline(s)? |
| Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? r YES r NO |
| Comments: |
| Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated)  *Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.* | How many syllabi were reviewed? |
| What kinds of courses? |
| What degree level(s)? |
| What discipline(s)? |
| Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? r YES r NO |
| Comments: |
| Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials) | How many programs were reviewed? |
| What kinds of programs were reviewed? |
| What degree level(s)? |
| What discipline(s)? |
| Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? r YES r NO |
| Comments: |

Review Completed By:

Date: