

Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine (VTCSOM)

Policy: Credit Hour Policy
Subject: Credit Hour Calculation
Administrator: H. Reynolds
Rev.: 5
Original date: 3/9/2012
Revision dates: 10/30/2013; 4/21/2014; 11/4/2015; 1/19/2017

1 Purpose

In compliance with Federal Regulation 34 CFR §602.24(f)(1)(i)(B) the following states the *Credit Hour Policy* for the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine. This policy shall be published annually as part of the Student Handbook.

2 Policy

Clock to Credit Hour Conversion

Consistent with practices at U.S. medical schools accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), the equivalent of credit hours in a medical education program (first professional degree) at a school is weeks of instruction in the curriculum. VTCSOM shall use the amount of classroom (direct faculty instruction) contact time or its equivalent as a basis to derive the number of credit hours during a given period, itself defined as the number of weeks of instruction. The factor applied shall be based upon the learning modality as described in Federal Regulation §602.24(f)(1)(i)(B) and hereby published in Table 1. Further, Table 2 provides guidelines for the comprehensive application of the credit hours earned during the four year VTCSOM program. (See, Tables *infra*)

Integrity of the Professional Degree Program (M.D.)

At least one-third of the credits for the medical education program are required to be earned through the VTCSOM. The following components establish the threshold for the minimum portion of the coursework the VTCSOM shall provide for the M.D. degree.

The VTCSOM curriculum is divided into two phases: Phase 1 is comprised of years 1 and 2 which are preclinical years. Years 3 and 4 comprise Phase 2 of the curriculum and focus on the clinical curriculum. The two phases are further divided into 11 blocks of medical education study.

- Year 1: Orientation, Blocks I, II, III, IV, M1 Research
- Year 2: Blocks V, VI, VII, VIII, M2 Independent Study (USMLE Step One Prep for medical licensure), M2 Research
- Year 3: Clerkships, Selectives, Electives, M3 Research,
- Year 4: Clerkships, Selectives, Electives, M4 Research, Transition to Residency I and II

Preclinical Years: Years 1 and 2

Years one and two include, in addition to basic science, clinical science and skills, research

and interprofessionalism course work, a mandatory orientation, assessment, special studies and remediation periods, research project time and US Medical Licensure Exam (USMLE) Step 1 preparation time.

Clinical Years: Years 3 and 4

Year three includes clinical clerkships and rotations in Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Neurology, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Radiology and Surgery. This period also includes research time. Year four includes multiple choices of specialties, (required electives include - one ICU elective, one medicine subspecialty and one surgery subspecialty), Transition to Residency I and II, and electives.

3 Procedures

Guidelines for the Application of the Credit Hour Policy

Table 1.

Time Period	Contact Hours	Earned Credit Hour	Learning Modality
Block I	25.5	1	Lecture, Lab, Small Groups, Patient Contact and Assessment
Block II	25.5	1	
Block III	25.5	1	
Block IV	25.5	1	
Year 1 Research	23	1	Independent Study
Block V	28.5	1	Lecture, Lab, Small Groups, Patient Contact and Assessment
Block VI	28.5	1	
Block VII	28.5	1	
Block VIII	28.5	1	
M2 Research Independent Study	29.5	1	Independent Study, Step 1 Prep
Year 3 Clerkships and Electives	80	1	Clinical Rotations
Electives	80	1	

Note: The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) limits contact hours to 80 per week. Students are given one credit per week of clinical experience in Years 3 and 4.

Table 2.

<i>Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine</i> <i>Summary of Contact Hour to Credit Hour Conversion 2012 - 2016</i>	Total Hours	Conv. Factor	Credit Hours	# of Weeks
Orientation	25	25.5	1	
Block I	280	25.5	11	
Block II	280	25.5	11	
Total Semester One	585		23	21
Block III	280	25.5	11	
Block IV	280	25.5	11	
M1 Research	120	40	3	
Total Semester Two	680		25	23
Block V	228	28.5	8	
Block VI	228	28.5	8	
Block VII	228	28.5	8	
Total Semester Three	684		24	24
Block VIII	228	28.5	8	
M2 Research and Independent Study (USMLE Step 1 prep)	560	29.5	19	
Total Semester Four	788		27	22
Total Year 3	3,840	80	48	48
Total Year 4	2,720	80	34	42
Grand Total MD Program	6,560		181	180

4 Definitions

Federal Definition of the Credit Hour

For purposes of the application of this policy and in accordance with federal regulations, 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:

- a. Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours 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
- b. At least an equivalent amount of work as required outlined in item 1 above for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practical, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

5 References

1. CFR 34 668.22
2. DCL ID: GEN-11-14 (Implementation of Program Integrity regulations)

Review

This policy shall be subject to review at least once every three years, or upon curriculum revision, whichever occurs first.

Reviewed and revised by Richard C. Vari, PhD, Senior Dean for Academic Affairs