



## **I. POLICY**

Credit Hour

## **II. PURPOSE**

This policy generally defines a credit hour, as well as specific requirements for the Doctor of Medicine degree, that is in alignment with the U.S. Department of Education and LCME guidelines.

## **III. RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND REVIEW CYCLE**

The Medical Education Phase leaders, the Registrar and Financial Aid will review this document annually. The Medical Education Committee shall review the document with input from the Curriculum Policy Subcommittee, Pre-clerkship Education Subcommittee, and/or the Clinical Education Subcommittee.

## **IV. ACCREDITATION REFERENCES**

LCME Element 6.8	Education Program Duration
LCME Element 8.8	Monitoring Student Time
SACSCOC 9.2	Program Length
SACSCOC 9.3	Institutional Credits for a Graduate/Professional Degree
SACSCOC 10.7	Policies for Awarding Credit

## **V. DESCRIPTION**

The SOM will employ the credit hour as the measure of educational credit a student may receive for reporting or other purposes. The use of the credit hour will follow the rules, regulations, and guidelines as specified by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

The Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree does not use the credit hour as a measure for which students receive credit or progress. Instead, the MD degree requires no less than 130 full-time weeks of credit over approximately four years. Credit hours will be determined using the following conversion methodology:

- The MEC will determine credit hours for each course each year. If content is moved, removed or added to a course, the MEC should review the course contact hours and credit hours and therefore the course length in weeks/days. Credit hours are determined based on the number of contact hours (including the lab).
- Course work and contact hours may be either synchronous or asynchronous depending on the course structure.
- The preclerkship phase contact hours include but are not limited to lectures, laboratory, small group sessions, case-based learning activities, and assessments. Average contact time per week in the preclerkship phase is no less than 15 hours. One full-time week equals one (1) credit hour.
- In the Clerkship and Elective phases, actual contact time is no more than 80 contact hours per week. One full-time week equals one (1) credit hour.

## **VI. RELATED DOCUMENTS**

Standards for Advancement and Graduation Policy  
Monitoring Student Time Policy

## **VII. HISTORY OF APPROVALS AND UPDATES**

The following list documents policy approvals and updates by oversight authority, date, and summary of changes. This policy is housed on the MD Student Handbook webpage.

1. On July 9, 2025, the Medical Education Committee approved this policy.