

American University of Beirut Assignment of Credit Hour

All degree and certificate programs at the American University of Beirut (AUB) are approved and officially registered with the Ministry of Higher Education in Lebanon and with the New York State Education Department (NYSED). AUB is accredited since 2004 by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, Tel. 267-284-5000) (**). The American University of Beirut's credit hour calculations for degree and certificate programs follow NYSED guidelines (*) – which are based on the U.S. Department of Education's definition of credit hour.

Faculties are responsible for all aspects of the curriculum and degree program requirements. Each Faculty has a curriculum committee that reviews proposed new and revised courses and degree programs, including the credit hours associated with each.

Credit Hour Definition at the American University of Beirut

At the American University of Beirut, a course credit (often called credit hour, or just credit or "unit") is a unit that gives weighting to the value, level or time requirements of an academic course taken at a college or university. A *semester hour* means a credit, point, or other unit granted for the satisfactory completion of a course which requires at least 15 hours (of 50 minutes each) of instruction and at least 30 hours of supplementary assignments.

Students typically receive credit hours based on the number of "contact hours" per week in class, for one term, formally, Semester Credit Hours. Regardless of the duration of the course (i.e. a short semester like summer or intersession), a semester credit hour (SCH) is 15-16 contact hours per semester. Most courses at the American University of Beirut are 3 Semester Credit Hours SCH or 45-48 contact hours. To provide students with the minimum 45-48 contact hours while accounting for holidays, classes start dates, etc., many courses will have 50 or more contact hours. For instance, a Monday/Wednesday/Friday course may have only 42 contact hours, while a Tuesday/Thursday course may have 48 contact hours. A credit for laboratory and studio courses as well as internships and practicums is usually less than for lecture - typically one credit for every two to three hours spent in lab or studio, depending on the amount of actual instruction necessary prior to lab.

(*) United States Department of Education – Credit Hour Definition

The U.S. Department of Education defines *credit hour* as: 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 not less than:

1. one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work 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,

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.

() Middle State Accreditation**

The American University of Beirut is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) issued a “credit hour policy” in August 2012 that requires MSCHE institutions to comply with the U.S. Department of Education’s definition of “credit hour”.