PURPOSE:

To provide a definition of a credit hour for courses to satisfy degree requirements.

GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT:

No credit is given for a course unless the student has been duly registered in that course.

The amount of credit given for the satisfactory completion of a course is based on the number of lectures and/or clinical experiences each week for one semester.

Class Meetings

The academic calendar at the LSU Law Center consists of two 14 week sessions (fall and spring) and one six week summer term (three hour classes meet 33 days and 2 hour classes meet 22 days). As prescribed by the American Bar Association, Standard 304 (b) “A law school shall require, as a condition for graduation, successful completion of a course of study in residence of not fewer than 58,000 minutes of instruction time…” and Standard 304 (e) Regular and punctual class attendance is necessary to satisfy residence credit and credit hour requirements.

LSU Law students complete 840 minutes of instruction time for each hour of credit earned. Additionally, all LSU Law students must obtain 94 credit hours to graduate, fulfilling the 58,000 minute requirement set by the ABA.

The Law Center adheres to the following guidelines regarding class meetings per semester:

- 4-credit hour classes that meet 4 times a week will meet for 56 class periods. Each period will consist of 60 minutes of instruction;
- 4-credit hour classes that meet 3 times a week will meet for 42 class periods. Two class periods will consist of 90 minutes of instruction, and one class period will consist of 60 minutes of instruction;
- 3-credit hour classes that meet 3 times a week will meet for 42 class periods. Each period will consist of 60 minutes of instruction;
- 3-credit hour classes that meet 2 times a week will meet for 28 class periods. Each period will consist of 90 minutes of instruction;
- 2-credit hour classes that meet 2 times a week will meet for 28 class periods. Each period will consist of 60 minutes of instruction;
- 2-credit hour classes that meet 1 time a week will meet for 14 class periods. Each period will consist of 120 minutes of instruction;
For short-term courses taught by visiting scholars, the Law Center adheres to the following guidelines regarding class meetings per semester:

- 1-credit hour classes will meet 3 times a week for 6 class periods, 4 times a week with at least 2 professional workshop periods, or 5 times a week with at least 1 professional workshop period. Each period will consist of 120 minutes of instruction and each professional workshop period will consist of 120 minutes of supervised practical learning;
- 2-credit hour classes that meet three times a week will meet for 12 class periods. Each period will consist of 120 minutes of instruction;

For Summer term courses, the Law Center adheres to the following guidelines regarding class meetings per semester:

- 3-credit hour classes that meet 5 times a week will meet for 33 class periods. Each period will consist of 75 minutes of instruction;
- 2-credit hour classes that meet 5 times a week will meet for 22 class periods. Each period will consist of 75 minutes of instruction;

Clinics and Externships

The Law Center offers numerous for-credit courses in the form of Clinics and Externships. The Law Center employs sound and acceptable practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for these courses.

The Clinical Program -- offers second and third-year students the opportunity to practice law or mediate disputes while still enrolled in law school. Students are qualified to act in the role as student attorneys pursuant to relevant administrative rules or pursuant to Louisiana Supreme Court Rule XX. Rule XX authorizes students to represent clients in State courts under the supervision of an attorney licensed in Louisiana and appointed as supervisors in the Law Center’s Clinical Program. Currently, the Law Center offers five clinics. Each of these clinics has a weekly classroom component. The students also have case responsibilities that are met outside of the regular class meeting time and are obligated to schedule meeting times with their supervisor to discuss their casework.

The Externships Program -- offers students the opportunity to work with governmental agencies and judges, legal service providers, and courts in the community. Unlike students enrolled in the Clinical Program, externship students are generally not qualified to practice law. Rather, they serve as law clerks and receive academic credit for their work. The Law Center has four structured externship classes that offer students either two or three credits. Each of these programs has a weekly, one-hour classroom component as well as required individual meetings with Law Center faculty supervising the externship.

In exceptional circumstances, the Law Center faculty may also approve the opportunity for law students to earn one or two credits for working in an externship in an area of particular
interest that is outside of one of the established externship programs. Upon approval of the full
time faculty, students seek the permission of faculty teaching them in a substantive course and
arrange an experiential placement with a lawyer, office, or agency in the particular substantive
field. Students may earn up to two credits in an Individual Externship. All of these
externships are supervised by a licensed attorney approved by the Law Center and the experience
is closely monitored by faculty.

Clinic and Externship courses are acceptable law school practices and are mandated by
Standard 302 of the American Bar Association Standards and Rules of Procedure for the
Approval of Law Schools.

In order to ensure and regularize the amount and level of credit for these experiential
courses, the faculty has approved a standardized measurement that for every one credit a student
receives in the Clinic or Externship course, the student must account for fifty hours of time over
the course of the semester. Therefore, for a three credit Clinic or Externship, the student must
account for 150 hours of work. For a two credit Externship, the student must account for 100
hours of work. These standards are adopted from the Best Practices of Legal Education: A
Vision and a Road Map (Best Practices) by Roy Stuckey. This book is a nationally accepted
guideline for best practices in legal education and provides a standard of practice that for every
credit a student earns in a law school course, the expectation is the student spends approximately
two and one half hours per week in class and on course work. Therefore, the expected norm is
one and one half hours per week for a three credit course. Best Practices (page 174) states:

Experiential education courses should be structured so that students spend
approximately the same amount of time per credit hour as they spend in non-
experiential courses. Credit should be awarded commensurate to the credit given
in the rest of the curriculum for comparable expenditures of student time. A
typical calculation is 1 credit for every 3.5 hours a week that students, on average,
are expected to spend. Credit should be given for all the time that the course
requires of students. For example, in-house clinical and externship students
expend time and effort completing the tasks necessary to represent clients or
perform other assigned tasks, attending supervision sessions with their instructors,
preparing for and attending classroom components, adhering to case management
protocols, and reflecting on their experiences. Workloads, frequency of classes,
requirements for supervision sessions, and expectations of time on task should all
be part of the calculus of determining appropriate credit for in-house clinics and
externships.

The accounting for time by students is closely monitored in Clinic and Externship
courses with regular time sheets which are evaluated and scrutinized. The students also regularly
produce work in relation to their placement which is measured with the time recorded on their
time sheets. Placement supervisors also evaluate student performance. Grades are under the
control of Law Center faculty, not external supervisors, and in the clinic practicums and
externship courses are issued on the pass/fail scale of “E” for Excellent, “HP” for High Pass, “P”
for Pass, or “F” for Fail. The two-credit Family Law Clinic Class, Immigration Clinic Class, and
the Juvenile Defense Clinic Class are graded according to the numerical system utilized by the Law Center.

**Attendance**

Regular and punctual class attendance is a prerequisite for receiving credit in a course. Pursuant to the pertinent accreditation requirements imposed by the American Bar Association, the faculty has established guidelines for course absences. The faculty has voted that a student who has more than the number of absences prescribed below shall not be allowed to take the exam or receive credit, regardless of the reasons for the absences, unless specific permission is granted by the faculty or its delegate.

**Fall and Spring Semesters**

- 3-hour courses that meet 3 times/week—9 class absences.
- 3-hour courses that meet 2 times/week—7 class absences.
- 2-hour courses that meet 2 times/week—7 class absences.
- 2-hour courses that meet 1 time/week—3 class absences.
- 4-hour courses that meet 4 times/week—14 class absences.
- 4-hour courses that meet 3 times/week—10 class absences.

The requirement to attend 75 percent of classes applies to Legal Research and Writing (5021) and (5022), and Advanced Appellate Advocacy (5609), but the number of classes for those courses may vary from the number normally scheduled for other two-hour courses. The maximum absences allowed in those courses (typically 5) will be announced at the beginning of the semester.

**Courses taught by visiting scholars**

- 1-hour course that meets 3 weeks (6 classes)—1 class absence.
- 2-hour courses that meet 6 weeks (12 classes)—2 class absences.

**Summer Term**

- 3-hour courses that meet 5 times/week—8 class absences.
- 2-hour courses that meet 5 times/week—6 class absences.

The requirement to attend 75 percent of classes also applies to one-hour courses and all courses taught in the Summer in France Program.

In seminars and other special courses, the attendance requirement may be higher. Individual professors may impose additional sanctions for absences.