

**THREE RIVERS COLLEGE  
INSTRUCTION REGULATION**

Section: 6000 Instruction	
Sub Section: 6500 Distance Learning	
Title: IR 6520 Online Learning	Page 1 of 6
Primary Policy: IP 6510 Distance Learning	
Associated Policies: IP 6310 Classroom Attendance; IP 6110 Definition of a Credit Hour; IP 6210 Curriculum Development; IP 6710 Faculty Rights and Responsibilities; GAP 1140 Institutional Effectiveness	
Associated Regulation: IR 6310 Classroom Attendance	
References: Standard Carnegie Unit for Time on Task; Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education (Online Learning); Quality Matters Standards (QM); Department of Education 34 CFR 600.2	
Supersedes: NA	
Responsible Administrator: Chief Academic Officer	
Initial Approval: 06-21-2017	Last Revision: 11-15-2023

Three Rivers College offers quality programs and courses delivered by distance means. The College utilizes distance learning to increase student access to learning opportunities; enhance the abilities of the college to respond to learner needs; respond to workforce development needs; ensure quality of instruction to place- and time-bound students; provide cost-effective service through cooperative and collaborative development and delivery; and reduce the unnecessary duplication of existing programs and courses.

**Online Course Development Process**

Courses taught in the online environment are delivered through the Learning Management System (LMS). Before an online or hybrid course is offered, faculty should consult with the chairperson of their academic unit to discuss whether the course material is appropriate for the online environment.

If the course material is deemed appropriate for the online environment, the faculty member begin(s) the curriculum approval process that may include but not limited to the following:

- Revision of Course Curriculum Form
- Course Framework for Online Course(s)
- Credit Hour Distribution (See Time on Task instructions below)

Once approved through the curriculum process, the faculty member will consult with the Office of Distance Learning for guidance on course design. Upon completion of the course design, the faculty member will notify the chairperson of their academic unit to schedule a course review.

Online courses are reviewed using the 2014 or later edition of the Quality Matters Rubric by faculty members who have been trained as QM Reviewers. The instructional content is also reviewed by a peer faculty member in the discipline. Courses are not scheduled until all identified corrections are made and the course is approved by the chairperson of the academic unit.

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### **Calculation of Credit Hour**

In compliance with the Federal definition of credit hour per 34 CFR 600.2, the College observes the following minimum time requirements for courses:

Students in online or blended/hybrid courses are expected to demonstrate they have met the student learning outcomes equivalent of course outcomes to that of a traditional/web-enhanced delivered course.

Students have the opportunity to meet course learning outcomes in a number of ways through online and/or hybrid coursework.

Direct faculty instruction includes but is not limited to:

- Weekly threaded discussion forums
- PowerPoint presentations without audio
- PowerPoint presentations with audio
- Lecture notes
- Video lectures
- Face-to-face meetings

Out of class student work includes:

- Readings
- Assigned videos (does not include lecture videos)
- Written assignments (papers, journals, reviews, etc.)
- Research
- Quizzes/Exams
- Case studies

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- PowerPoint presentations
- Assigned homework problems
- Clinical/Practicum/Internship
- Other approved activities

**Time on Task**

Time on task is the total learning time spent by a student in a college course, including instructional time as well as time spent completing course assignments (e.g., reading, research, writing, individual and group projects.) Without regard to the delivery method or the learning activities employed, the amount of learning time in any college course should meet the guideline of a total of 45 hours for one semester credit. The time is historically based on the Carnegie unit, which served as the basis for the determination of an academic credit hour.

"Instruction" is provided differently in online courses than in classroom-based courses. Despite the difference in methodology and activities, however, the total "learning time" online can usually be counted. Rather than try to distinguish between "in-class" and "outside-class" time for students, the faculty member developing and/or teaching the online course should calculate how much time a student doing satisfactory work would take to complete the work of the course.

The total learning time should be roughly equal to that spent on comparable tasks in a classroom-based course. Time spent downloading or uploading documents, troubleshooting technical problems, or in chat rooms (unless on course assignments such as group projects) should not be counted. Without regard to course mode or type of learning activities assigned, the total amount of student time on task for any course (traditional, online, hybrid, independent study, etc.) should total 45 hours per credit/contact hour.

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**Calculations for an 8-week course:**

Credit Hours	Direct Instruction Hours	Student Work Hours	Total Course Hours
1	15	30	45/8-weeks
2	30	60	90/8-weeks
3	45	90	135/8-weeks
4	60	120	180/8-weeks
5	75	150	240/8-weeks

**Calculations for a 16-week course: *\*\*Final exams and/or presentations are completed during the 16<sup>th</sup> week.***

Credit Hours	Direct Instruction Hours	Student Work Hours	Total Course Hours
1	15	30	45/16-weeks
2	30	60	90/16-weeks
3	45	90	135/16-weeks
4	60	120	180/16-weeks
5	75	150	240/16-weeks

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**Calculations for direct faculty instruction:**

<b>Activity Type</b>	<b>Time Requirement</b>
Weekly threaded discussion forums	1 post + 2 replies = 1 hour
PowerPoint Presentations without audio	1 slide = 3 minutes
PowerPoint Presentations with audio	1 slide variable = 5-10 minutes
Lecture notes	1 page = 5 minutes
Video lectures	length of video multiplied by 1.5 to account for notetaking
Face-to-Face meetings (hybrid only)	1 hour = 1 hour

**Calculations for student work:**

<b>Activity Type</b>	<b>Time Requirement</b>
Readings	10 minutes per page
Assigned video	1 min per minute of video
Written assignments (papers, journals, reviews, etc.)	1 hour per page
Research	1 hour per article/source
Quizzes/Exams	Variable 30 minutes – 1 hour
Case Studies	1 hour per page
PowerPoint Presentations	30 minutes per slide
Assigned homework problems	10 minutes per problem

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**DOCUMENT HISTORY:**

**06-21-2017:** Initial approval of regulation IR 6520 Online Learning.

**11-15-2023:** Clarifications to align with Federal regulation 34 CFR 600.2 and minor edits to align with college operations.