

Determination of Credit

Credits awarded by the School of Law are determined in accordance with ABA Standard 310 and regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Education, which establish the minimum requirements for the awarding of credit. The ABA standard, reprinted below, effectively requires that for each credit awarded, students should be performing a minimum of 42.5 hours of combined in-class and out-of-class work. Individual faculty members are free to require additional class time or out-of-class work that exceeds this minimum. Although the standard does not dictate particular amounts of classroom time versus out-of-class work, it is School of Law policy that classes are scheduled to meet for a number of hours each week equal to the number of credits awarded for the course (or for the classroom portion of the course, if there is also a fieldwork component). Any variance from this policy must be specifically approved by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs based on a showing of strong educational justifications or other compelling circumstances.

Standard 310. DETERMINATION OF CREDIT HOURS FOR COURSEWORK

- (a) A law school shall adopt, publish, and adhere to written policies and procedures for determining the credit hours that it awards for coursework.
- (b) A “credit hour” is an amount of work that reasonably approximates:
 - (1) not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and two hours of out-of-class student work per week for fifteen weeks, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
 - (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as required in subparagraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including simulation, field placement, clinical, co-curricular, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Interpretation 310-1

For purposes of this Standard, fifty minutes suffices for one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction. An “hour” for out-of-class student work is sixty minutes. The fifteen-week period may include one week for a final examination.

Interpretation 310-2

A school may award credit hours for coursework that extends over any period of time, if the coursework entails no less than the minimum total amounts of classroom or direct faculty instruction and of out-of-class student work specified in Standard 310(b).

The policy that follows sets forth the School of Law’s policies and procedures for determining the credit hours that it awards for coursework. For each course that a faculty member teaches, the faculty member will complete a form to demonstrate how their course meets the minimum credit hours requirement.

1 Definitions

Classroom or direct faculty instruction includes all scheduled class meetings, tutorials or other one-to-one or small-group meetings with the instructor, and taking in-class examinations.

Out-of-Class work includes time spent preparing for class (reading or completing class assignments); preparing for the in-class exam, completing the take home exam, and/or preparing and completing other assessments; researching and writing any required paper(s) or other writing assignments; performing clinical or field placement work; and attending educational events as mandated by the instructor.

2 Determination of Classroom or Direct Faculty Instruction

The Faculty of the School of Law has approved an academic calendar that is based on a 14 week semester (or the equivalent in a more compressed timeframe for the summer or winter terms) followed by an examination period. For types of credit that include a classroom component, the Office of the Registrar schedules classes commensurate with the credit load of the course (no less than 50 minutes per week/per credit), as well as the scheduling of any required exam. Individual faculty members may require more than this minimum amount of class time, and may require students to attend tutorials or other out-of-class meetings with the faculty member.

3 Determination of Out-of-Classroom Work

The following guidelines will be used to determine how many credit hours for out-of-classroom work will ordinarily be awarded for certain types of out-of-class activities. When completing the form describing the credit hours for their courses, faculty members may use different assumptions about the amount of time students spend on particular types of out-of-class work, as long as they provide adequate explanation of their reasons.

- 3.1 **Readings for 1L Courses:** Understanding that first-year law students are new to case reading and need additional time to complete or repeat reading assignments, credit hours for their reading assignments will be based on an assumption that they spend approximately 12 minutes on each page of reading. For a course in which reading assignments are the only required out-of-class activity, this means that in order to meet the minimum credit hour requirement, an average of at least 10 pages of weekly reading needs to be assigned per credit.
- 3.2 **Readings for Upper Division Courses:** Understanding that reading comprehension improves as law students continue in their studies, credit hours for their reading assignments will be based on an assumption that they spend approximately 6 minutes on each page of reading, and approximately 12 minutes on each page for reading material that is particularly dense or complex. (For purposes of calculating credit hours, the faculty member will be given the opportunity to indicate how much of the reading falls into each category.) For a course in which reading assignments are the only required out-of-class activity, this means that in order to meet the minimum credit hour requirement, an average of at least 20 pages of weekly reading per credit needs to be assigned (or less, depending on how much of the reading is particularly dense or complex).
- 3.3 **Outlining or Preparing for Examinations or for In-Class Exercises or Presentations:** In determining how much time students spend preparing for examinations, it will be assumed that students devote three hours of out of class preparation for each hour of a mid-term examination, and five hours of out of class preparation for each hour of a final examination. Faculty members shall provide a reasonable estimate of how much time students are expected to spend preparing for any required in-class exercises or presentations.
- 3.4 **Completion of Take Home Examinations:** Take home examinations, by policy, are limited to 24 hours. In determining how much time students spend completing take home examinations, it will be assumed that a maximum of 12 hours are spent on the exam - including on those exams for which more time has been allotted. For take home exams for which 12 or fewer hours has been allotted, it will be assumed that students spend the entirety of the allotted time on the exam.
- 3.5 **Preparation of Course Papers:** For short writing assignments with no research required, an estimate of 30 minutes per page will be used. For short writing assignments which require research, an estimate of 60 minutes per page will be used. For upper-division course research or final paper assignments, an estimate of 150 minutes (or 2.5 hours) per page will be used.
- 3.6 **Clinical Courses:** Faculty members teaching clinical courses shall provide a reasonable estimate of how much time students are required to spend on case, client, or project work required to meet clinical fieldwork requirements, based on student time logs or by estimating the amount of time needed to complete the tasks reflected in the students' work product.
- 3.7 **Co-Curricular Activities:** For other activities for which credit is awarded faculty advisors shall provide, calculate, and report a reasonable estimate of hours required to complete, in accordance with the minimum requirements of this policy.

For Moot Court and Mock Trial Competitions: A reasonable estimate of practice hours and hours spent in actual competition shall be reported, together with time devoted to preparing any required brief or other document(s). In calculating the time required to prepare briefs or other documents, an estimate of 60 minutes per page will be used. Certification that students have fulfilled these requirements will be provided by faculty advisors or the Associate Dean for Experiential Education. For Law Review/Law Journals: The required time commitments and work product are addressed in the by-laws of each journal. Certification that students have fulfilled these requirements will be provided by faculty advisors in consultation with Editors-in-Chief.

- 3.8 **Teaching Assistantship:** The requirements to receive credit for a Teaching Assistantship are set forth in the Academic Regulations, and compliance with those requirements shall be certified by the supervising faculty member.
- 3.9 **Individual Field Placements:** A minimum of 56 hours of logged work will be required for each credit awarded.
- 3.10 **Independent Research Projects:** A minimum of 10 pages, as well as the research required to complete these pages, will be required for each credit awarded.

4 Notification of Requirements for Credit Determination

It shall be the responsibility of faculty members to announce all assignments and expectations for required out-of-class work.

5 Adherence to Guidelines for Credit Determination

It shall be the responsibility of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs to assure consistency and adherence to the guidelines for credit determination.

- 5.1 **Course Scheduling:** The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will ensure that all courses are scheduled in conformity with this policy.
- 5.2 **Faculty Course Certifications:** For each course with a regularly scheduled classroom component, the instructor shall submit a worksheet of how course credit requirements will be met. This certification will be completed for each course each term and shall include the amount of direct faculty instruction and out of classroom assignments. These certifications shall be reviewed by Associate Dean for Academic Affairs each term to ensure compliance with this policy.

Additional Review: The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or his/her designee will undertake a biennial audit to ensure compliance with guidelines for credit determination for co-curricular credits. This may include review of the following:

- Independent Research Projects
- Individual Field Placement Logs
- Law Review/Law Journal Editors-in-Chief Certifications¹
- Mock Trial/Moot Court Competition Briefs²

- 5.3 **New/Revised Course Proposals:** The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, in collaboration with the Educational Policy Committee, shall review new/revised course proposals for compliance with the guidelines for credit determination. In conducting such reviews, the faculty course certifications may be used to confirm compliance.

Dated: December 2017

¹ See Appendix A.

² See Appendix B.

Appendix A

Law Review/Law Journal Certifications

Editors-in-Chief with the approval of the Faculty Law Review Journal Advisors must complete this form to award credit for work done in satisfaction of the requirements of Law Review/Law Journal Membership.

We are certifying that the student(s) listed below have contributed 42.5 hours of engagement per credit awarded, pursuant to ABA Standard 310 and School of Law policy.

Editor-in-Chief Signature/Date:	
Faculty Advisor Signature/ Date:	

Student Name:

of Credits to Be Awarded:

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Appendix B

Mock Trial/Moot Court Competition Certifications

The Associate Dean for Experiential Education (in the case of Mock Trial Competitions) and the Faculty Advisor (in the case of Moot Court Competitions) must complete this form to approve the award or credit.

I am certifying that the student(s) listed below have contributed 42.5 hours of engagement per credit awarded, pursuant to ABA Standard 310 and School of Law policy.

Associate Dean for Experiential Education/Date:	
Faculty Advisor Signature/ Date:	

Student Name:

of Credits to Be Awarded:

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