

PRINCIPLES FOR COURSE CREDIT ASSIGNMENT: GRADUATE STUDIES

A. Introduction

The principles articulated below are an attempt to guide decision making for graduate level programs on assigning course credit, factoring in the assumption that a typical student is in view.¹ These Principles apply to all courses intended to be offered at a graduate level (certificate, diploman, or degree)². These courses include all graduate versions of dual-listed courses.

B. Principles

1. Compliance Standards: Assignment of course credit for graduate level courses must be in compliance with all relevant expectations of Policy 209 (Graduate Course and Program Approval), Policy 105 (Course Credits), and BC Provincial standards.
2. Workload: “Workload is an estimation of the time the individual typically needs to complete all learning activities such as lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, work placements and individual study required to achieve the defined learning outcomes in formal learning environments³. While there is a recognized set of workload time factors outlined in Policy 105, it is accepted that some graduate level programs/courses may deviate from commonly utilized principles for course credit to account for variables in course delivery methods, conceptual complexity of course content and learning outcomes, and other program/course specific issues.
3. Consideration of Practice in Like Discipline(s): Assignment of credits for graduate level courses should consider known approaches in similar disciplines in other Canadian programs (and/or other countries if applicable). Deviations from what may be perceived as standard practice should include an explanation for doing so.

C. Guidelines

When submitting graduate level courses to the Graduate Studies Committee of Senate for approval, the following questions (where applicable) must be considered:

1. How much workload time will be expected of a student for this course?
2. What amount of course credit is commonly assigned to similar courses at UFV or elsewhere?
3. What rationale exists for assigning a different level of course credit than for similar courses at UFV or elsewhere?
4. How many learning outcomes are connected to this course and where on the degree of complexity do they range? If outcomes are more complex in level, should more credit hours be assigned to this course?

¹ While the credit hour system as a part of higher education is relatively new, it is entrenched in most higher education systems around the world. In spite of the fact the system has been criticized for decades, there does not appear to be any obvious change to the system on the horizon. The work of the Bologna Process has greatly advanced thinking and practices around the transfer of credits, particularly in Europe. What it does not appear to have yet done is fundamentally change the view of how to quantify the educational experience in courses/programs.

² These are most commonly listed at UFV as “700 level” courses.

³ The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) User’s Guide 2015 (http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/docs/ects-users-guide_en.pdf, p. 10).