

Applying Whitman Calculation of Credits Guidelines to Crossroads Courses

Introduction:

These guidelines for Crossroads credits have been created by the Off-Campus Studies Committee to make it easier for faculty proposing a Crossroads course to determine the appropriate number of credits, in conformity both with the general College policy for course credits and with federal educational guidelines.

This document was produced based on discussions by the Off-Campus Studies Committee in Spring 2018. We considered the U.S. Department of Education's guidelines, Whitman's *Calculation of Credits - A User's Guide*, and examples from other institutions about their formulas for calculating credits for short-term study abroad.

Please note:

- Because of the nature of off-campus studies, "class activities" are fairly broadly defined. Therefore, the number of actual contact hours may greatly exceed the minimum number of FIU and SWU hours associated with a particular number of credits.
- As a guideline, we expect that the number of credits awarded during Crossroads courses will typically not exceed 1 credit per each week of the course. Crossroads courses are 2-6 weeks in length.
- The maximum number of total credits that can be awarded for a Crossroads course is 6 credits.

Credit Calculations Guidelines for Crossroads Courses:

Crossroads course activities that count toward the credit hours must be connected to the goals of the specific Crossroads course.

- Whitman requires a combination of 1 Faculty Instructional Unit (1 FIU = 12 hours) and 1 Student Work Unit (1 SWU = 24 hours) for each credit*, or some equivalent combination thereof.
- For example, a course could have a total of 4 FIU and 4 SWU or a total of 2 FIU and 6 SWU to also be equivalent to a 4 credit course. (See sample schedule at the end of this document.)

* Please note that this is the minimum number of contact hours required per credit.

- **In the context of Crossroads courses, the Faculty Instructional Unit hours may include a range of formal instructional activities, such as:**
 - Instruction by faculty member (eg lectures, concentrated and organized discussions)
 - Guest lectures or community briefings/visits that are concentrated and content rich

- **In the Crossroads context, Student Work Unit hours may encompass a broad range of learning activities, including but not limited to:**
 - Informal discussions
 - Informal visits with community groups and local organizations
 - Field work, studio work, and research
 - Guided tours
 - Readings and homework

*Note that travel time and meals are not counted as part of the activity unless the faculty member or someone else is leading a briefing or reflection activity during the travel or meals.

Sample schedule* for a four-week Crossroads course for 4 credits:

2 hours of formal instructional time with the faculty member per day x 6 days per week = 12 hours per week x 4 = 48 hours for 4 weeks

4 hours of out-of-classroom activities and/or student work per day x 6 days per week = 24 hours per week x 4 = 96 hours

48 faculty instructional hours / 12 hours per FIU = 4 FIUs

96 out-of-classroom activities hours / 24 hours per SWU = 4 SWUs

$\frac{4 \text{ FIUs} + 4 \text{ SWUs}}{2} = 4 \text{ credits}$

*NOTE: The sample above is just one possibility to consider. The balance of formal instruction versus out-of-classroom activities and/or student work can vary a great deal depending on the academic discipline and the nature of the Crossroads course. The options are endless.