

Wayne State University Law School
ABA Standard 310 Credit Hours Policy
(Effective as of January 8, 2018)

The Law School's faculty has adopted this Credit Hours Policy ("Policy") in order to implement the accreditation requirements of American Bar Association Standard 310 ("Standard 310") for determination of credit hours.

In accordance with Standard 310, students must complete an amount of work that reasonably approximates at least 45 hours of coursework per credit hour awarded. "Coursework" includes both (1) direct faculty instruction or classroom time and (2) out-of-class student work. In accordance with Standard 310, hours for coursework will be computed for purposes of the foregoing by treating (1) 50 minutes of direct faculty instruction or classroom time as equivalent to one hour¹ and (2) 60 minutes of out-of-class student work as equivalent to one hour. For purposes of this Policy, "direct faculty instruction or classroom time" includes any time allotted for monitored examination, as well as any time allotted for mandatory faculty-led review sessions or mandatory faculty-student meetings; and "out-of-class student work" includes student work required to complete traditional reading assignments, writing and/or research assignments, group problems, and/or any non-traditional out-of-class assigned student work, as well as the hours of student work required to prepare adequately for classes and examinations (monitored or take-home) and to complete take-home examinations. Both direct faculty instruction or classroom time and out-of-class student work are determined in the aggregate over a semester. A "semester" as referenced in this Policy includes the thirteen weeks of the Law School's fall and winter terms, the 6-1/2 weeks (10 weeks in the case of externship practicum and colloquium coursework) of the Law School's spring/summer term, and the reading periods and examination periods for each such term.

Effective as of January 8, 2018, for each type of coursework for which the Law School grants credit toward a degree, the requirements specified below will apply:

Lecture-type courses:

The Law School offers a number of lecture-type courses. For purposes of this Policy, a "lecture-type class" refers to a traditional law school course involving lecture, Socratic-style question and answer, other faculty-directed discussion, or any combination of the foregoing. Such a lecture-type class typically, but not always, culminates in a monitored final examination, and the number of credit hours for a lecture-type class correlates to the number of classroom hours for which such class is scheduled to meet each week during the Law School's semester.

For each credit hour awarded for coursework for lecture-type classes, faculty will (1) provide students with at least 750 minutes (equivalent to 15 50-minute "hours") of direct faculty instruction or classroom time during the semester and (2) make assignments that the assigning

¹ ABA Interpretation 310-1 provides that "fifty minutes suffices for one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction" under Standard 310.

faculty member reasonably believes will require at least 30 hours of out-of-class student work during the semester. The Law School's Associate Dean will schedule regular class periods with a duration of 55 minutes per credit hour² for each of the thirteen weeks of the Law School's standard fall and winter semesters³ (and equivalent minutes per credit hour for each week of the Law School's spring/summer semester) (such schedule to be considered the "normal schedule"). To the extent such normal schedule results in fewer than 750 minutes of direct faculty instruction or classroom time during the semester for a particular lecture-type class,⁴ the faculty member who teaches such class must schedule at least one of the following: (1) a monitored examination outside of regularly scheduled class periods; (2) a mandatory faculty-led review session outside of regularly scheduled class periods; or (3) mandatory faculty-student meetings outside of regularly scheduled class periods (or other similar mandatory sessions involving direct faculty instruction outside of regularly scheduled class periods). Such monitored examination, mandatory faculty-led review session, or mandatory faculty-student meetings must be scheduled to offer each student sufficient additional minutes of direct faculty instruction or classroom time, outside of regularly scheduled class periods, to provide a total of 750 minutes of direct faculty instruction or classroom time per credit hour. Such monitored examination, mandatory faculty-led review session, or mandatory faculty-student meetings will be considered part of the normal schedule.

The normal schedule specified above may be adjusted, with the consent of and after discussion with the Law School's Associate Dean, for a lecture-type class in which the faculty member requires and includes on the course syllabus time for (1) additional direct faculty instruction or classroom time outside of regularly scheduled class periods or (2) additional out-of-class student work that, in the aggregate, results in at least the same total hours of coursework as the normal schedule. However, notwithstanding the foregoing, under no circumstances will any adjustment to the normal schedule be permitted unless (1) the adjusted schedule provides a total of at least 45 hours of coursework per credit hour and (2) the faculty member who requests the adjustment provides written justification and a detailed computation of how the adjusted schedule will satisfy Standard 310 and this Policy.

Seminars:

² For any class scheduled for a duration of at least 110 classroom minutes on one day, the Associate Dean will schedule additional time (10 minutes) to permit a break during the class. Such additional break time will not be counted in the computation of the number of minutes of direct faculty instruction or classroom time for such a class.

³ The schedule for the winter 2018 semester was fixed during the fall 2017 semester while this Policy was under consideration but not yet finalized and adopted. In order to ensure compliance with Standard 310 for the winter 2018 semester, the Associate Dean scheduled classes (other than clinics and externship colloquium classes) for 60 minutes per week per credit hour.

⁴ A three-credit lecture-type class scheduled in 85-minute blocks (the Law School's ordinary schedule for three-credit classes taught two days per week) two days each week for thirteen weeks will provide 2210 minutes of direct faculty instruction or classroom time. A three-credit lecture-type class scheduled in three 55-minute blocks each week for thirteen weeks will provide 2145 minutes of direct faculty instruction or classroom time. In order to satisfy Standard 310, a three-credit lecture-type class must provide at least 2250 minutes (3 x 750 minutes) of direct faculty instruction or classroom time. The additional required minutes per credit hour will be provided through a monitored examination, mandatory faculty-led review session, or mandatory faculty-student meetings.

The Law School offers a number of courses approved as “seminars” by the Law School’s Academic Affairs & Curriculum Committee. For purposes of this Policy, a “seminar” refers to a course that includes a classroom component and requires significant amounts of out-of-class research and writing work by students. As a reflection of the amount of out-of-class research and writing work required of students, the Law School awards three credit hours for seminars although the number of classroom hours for which seminar classes are scheduled to meet correlates to two hours each week during the Law School’s semester.⁵

For the three credit hours awarded for coursework for seminars, faculty will (1) provide students with at least 1430 minutes (equivalent to 28.6 50-minute “hours”) of direct faculty instruction or classroom time during the semester and (2) make assignments that the assigning faculty member reasonably believes will require at least 106.4 hours of out-of-class student work during the semester, including during the reading and examination periods for such semester.⁶ The Law School’s Associate Dean will schedule seminar class periods with a duration of 55 minutes per credit hour⁷ for each of the thirteen weeks of the Law School’s standard fall and winter semesters (and equivalent minutes per credit hour for each week of the Law School’s spring/summer semester) (such schedule to be considered the “normal schedule”).

The normal schedule specified above may be adjusted, with the consent of and after discussion with the Law School’s Associate Dean, for a seminar class in which the faculty member requires and includes on the course syllabus time for mandatory faculty-student meetings outside of regularly scheduled class periods (or other similar mandatory sessions involving direct faculty instruction outside of regularly scheduled class periods). However, notwithstanding the foregoing, under no circumstances will any adjustment to the normal schedule be permitted unless (1) the adjusted schedule provides a total of at least 45 hours of coursework per credit hour and (2) the faculty member who requests the adjustment provides written justification and a detailed computation of how the adjusted schedule will satisfy Standard 310 and this Policy.

Directed Study:

The Law School permits students to receive up to two credits for a directed study. The type of work completed for a directed study is determined by the supervising faculty member and the student, subject to the Law School’s Academic Regulations. For each credit hour awarded for any directed study, a student must complete at least 45 hours of out-of-class work under the supervision of a faculty member in accordance with the Academic Regulations. Students must provide the supervising faculty member with a log of all hours worked by the last day of the

⁵ The Law School’s seminars thus fit the category of a “paper course” as discussed in the ABA Managing Director’s Guidance Memo, Standard 310 (May 2016).

⁶ As noted above, the 1430 minutes equals 28.6 hours of direct faculty instruction or classroom time, computed using Standard 310’s approved equivalence of 50 minutes for each hour. In order to provide a total of at least 135 coursework hours as required for a three-credit course (including all seminars), the remaining 106.4 hours for a seminar must be satisfied by required out-of-class student work.

⁷ For any class scheduled for a duration of at least 110 classroom minutes on one day, the Associate Dean will schedule additional time (10 minutes) to permit a break during the class. Such additional break time will not be counted in the computation of the number of minutes of direct faculty instruction or classroom time for such a class.

examination period for the semester for which directed study credit is sought, including hours worked after completion of at least 45 hours of out-of-class work per credit hour.

Clinics:

The Law School offers a number of clinics that permit students to earn varying numbers of credit hours depending on the clinic in which a student works. Each basic clinic includes both a classroom component and a minimum number of out-of-class hours of clinic work. Advanced clinics may or may not include a classroom component, but all require a minimum number of out-of-class hours of clinic work.

For each credit hour awarded for coursework for any clinic, faculty will provide students with sufficient hours of direct faculty instruction or classroom time that, when combined with assigned out-of-class student work during the semester, should total at least 45 hours of coursework during the semester. Clinic coursework includes: (1) mandatory faculty-led clinic orientation sessions, (2) a student's preparing for and attending weekly clinic seminars and case rounds, (3) student meetings with faculty for regularly scheduled supervision sessions, as well as additional sessions as necessary, and (4) all aspects of a student's work in advising and representing clients and related matters involved generally in running a law practice. In accordance with the requirements of the clinic in which a student is enrolled, clinic students must provide the faculty member teaching the clinic with a log of all hours worked outside of direct faculty instruction and classroom time, including hours worked after the student has completed at least 45 hours of coursework per credit hour.

Externships:

The Law School offers a number of externship field placements that permit students to earn credit hours upon successful completion of the externship requirements. In order to earn two or four credit hours for an externship field placement⁸ during a semester, a student must (1) complete at least 150 hours of supervised work at the field placement (called an externship "practicum") during the semester and (2) enroll in a companion lecture-type class (called an externship "colloquium") during the same semester. The colloquium class offers direct faculty instruction and classroom time, and requires out-of-class student work, related to the field placement externship practicum. Each colloquium class meets each week during a semester for approximately two hours per week.

For the two or four credit hours awarded for coursework for the combination of an externship practicum and colloquium,⁹ faculty will (1) provide at least 1430 minutes (equivalent to 28.6 50-minute "hours") of direct faculty instruction or classroom time during the semester through the colloquium class, (2) make assignments that the faculty member reasonably believes will require at least 1.4 hours of out-of-class student work during the semester, and (3) require students to

⁸ If a student completes an externship field placement and the related colloquium class, the student may earn four hours of credit. Students may elect to earn only two hours of credit by enrolling for credit only in the colloquium class, but a student who makes such an election must still fulfill the requirements of the practicum. Students may not earn credit for an externship practicum without also taking the related colloquium class for credit.

⁹ *Id.*

complete at least 150 hours of out-of-class work through the externship field placement. The Law School's Associate Dean will schedule colloquium class periods with a duration of 110 minutes per week¹⁰ for each of the thirteen weeks of the Law School's standard fall and winter semesters, and equivalent minutes per credit hour for each week of the Law School's spring/summer semester (such schedule to be considered the "normal schedule").

Co-Curricular Activities and Other Academic Work:

The Law School offers a variety of co-curricular activities and opportunities for other substantive academic work, including moot court, mock trial, transactional and other competition programs, and law reviews and journals (collectively and individually referred to herein as "co-curricular activity"). The Law School awards a maximum of one credit hour per semester for satisfactory completion of these activities, subject to the requirements of each such activity and the Academic Regulations.

For any co-curricular activity for which credit is awarded, a student must complete at least 45 hours of out-of-class work per credit hour in accordance with the requirements of the activity and under the supervision of the faculty adviser for the activity. Students must log all hours worked, even after the student has completed at least 45 hours of out-of-class work per credit hour; however, travel time and administrative time related to any competition-related co-curricular activity (such as moot court or mock trial) will not be counted and should not be logged as time worked for purposes of determining whether the student has completed at least 45 hours of out-of-class work per credit hour.

Exceptions, Documentation, and Compliance Review:

Exceptions

The Law School recognizes that unusual individual circumstances (such as illness, family emergency, or military obligations) may from time to time require a significant schedule adjustment for a particular course. When such a schedule adjustment is requested for a particular semester, the Associate Dean may make such adjustment after discussion with the faculty member who has requested the adjustment as long as the amount of coursework required under the adjusted schedule satisfies both Standard 310 and this Policy. In making a schedule adjustment under this paragraph, the Associate Dean will schedule class periods that in the aggregate during the semester provide at least an equal number of minutes of direct faculty instruction or classroom time to the number of such minutes that would have otherwise been provided under this Policy for the type of course at issue. Any faculty member requesting an adjusted schedule pursuant to this paragraph must establish in writing to the satisfaction of the

¹⁰ The required 150 hours of field placement out-of-class work provided by the externship practicum, plus the 1430 minutes (equivalent to 28.6 50-minute "hours") of direct faculty instruction or classroom time provided through the related and required externship colloquium class, plus at least 1.4 hours of out-of-class student work required for the colloquium class by itself total to at least 180 hours of externship coursework for students. Students who enroll in a colloquium class must complete 150 hours of field placement out-of-class work in order to receive credit for the colloquium class even if they are paid for the field placement work and thus are eligible under the Law School's Academic Regulations to earn only two credit hours for the externship placement.

Associate Dean that the hours of out-of-class student work required under the adjusted schedule will in the aggregate during the semester provide at least an equal number of minutes of out-of-class student work to the number of such minutes that would have been required under this Policy for the type of course at issue before any adjustments under this paragraph.

Documentation and Compliance

Each semester, for each class or other type of coursework for which students earn credit, the faculty member teaching or supervising such coursework will submit to the Dean's Office a signed certificate that details how the coursework satisfies Standard 310 and this Policy, including an explanation of (1) all types of required out-of-class work, (2) the expected number of minutes required for a student to complete such required out-of-class work, and (3) the basis on which the faculty member determined the expected number of minutes required to complete such required out-of-class work. A certificate form appropriate for the type of coursework at issue (e.g., lecture-type classes or seminars) will be provided to faculty each semester by the Dean's Office. The Associate Dean or designee each semester will review the completed certificates to verify compliance with Standard 310 and this Policy.

Each faculty member will also include in his or her syllabi each semester for each course an explanation of how the course satisfies Standard 310 and this Policy.¹¹ In accordance with University policy, each such syllabi will be submitted to the Dean's Office. The Associate Dean or designee each semester will review all syllabi to verify compliance with Standard 310 and this Policy.

Each new course submitted for approval to the Academic Affairs and Curriculum Committee must include an explanation of how the course satisfies Standard 310 and this Policy, and no new course will be approved by the Committee unless the Committee is satisfied that the course will satisfy Standard 310 and this Policy.

The Associate Dean will schedule all coursework in accordance with this Policy, and no exceptions will be made without detailed documentation certifying that the requirements of Standard 310 and this Policy will be satisfied.

¹¹ Although each syllabus must include an explanation of how the course satisfies Standard 310 and this Policy, such explanation does not necessarily need to include the basis on which the faculty member determined the expected number of minutes required to complete each type of out-of-class work. Such explanation must be included, however, on the signed certificate separately submitted to the Dean's Office.