

Toyota Technological Institute at Chicago

Credits Policy

1. Summary Statement

This policy outlines the formula and process of assigning and awarding credit in the PhD program, who is involved and in what forum decisions are made.

2. Purpose of Policy

This policy assures compliance with the federal Higher Education Opportunity Act, best practices in higher education and allows the faculty to oversee course quality and assessment as the program curriculum evolves.

3. Date of Current Version

9/08/23

Date(s) of Prior Versions

8/30/16, 9/12/19, 9/8/20, 8/25/21

Original Effective Date of Policy

8/30/16

Policy is maintained by the Registrar. (Last approved via APG update Sept 2023)

4. Policy Maintenance

This policy is maintained by the Registrar with changes jointly approved by the faculty.

5. Policy in Detail

TTIC's institutional policy regarding the awarding of credit is in compliance with the federal definitions regarding the assignment of credit, and reflects the current practices of the PhD program.

Federal definitions and regulations regarding the assignment of credit hours appear as follows under Section 600.2 and 600.24(f) of the Higher Education Opportunity Act:

Credit hour: Except as provided in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l), a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than—

1. One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

The course unit is the measure of credit at TTIC. Most Institute courses typically award 100 units. Alternate units may be awarded based on varying degrees of work, instruction hours or other factors.

Quarter-long classes typically meet three hours per week on average (three 50-minute sessions per week or two 80-minute sessions) over a 10-week term. Students are generally expected to spend at least two to three hours outside of class preparing for each hour in class. Courses that meet for more or less time may bear proportionally more or less credit. For example, graduate special topics courses that meet for three hours every week but have minimal outside homework and possibly no final exam receive 50 units of credit.

Instruction and learning at TTIC take different forms. Some significant learning consists entirely of research and independent work, or hands-on work in the robotics laboratory. Earning full units of credit means the student has

satisfactorily demonstrated that they have achieved expected learning outcomes, acquired the essential skills taught in the course, or reached research outcomes enough to obtain a passing grade in the academic engagement activity described for that course.

Each 100 unit course is equivalent to 3.3 semester hours or 5 quarter hours.

Candidacy requires 1000 units to be completed, and an additional 200 units are required post-Candidacy to obtain the PhD (observing grade requirements).

A contact hour is a measure that represents an hour of scheduled instruction given to students. (Classroom instruction time for a traditional class, or instructions and discussion time for an independent research course.)

No Credit Awarded

Internships, while considered experiential education, do not award degree credit, are not a requirement of the program, and are intended to be no longer than one quarter per year (for full-time work). (See Internship section of this Guide)

All But Thesis (ABT) status does not award credit toward a degree. ABT status is reserved for a student whose only remaining requirements are the completion and final defense of their thesis.

Tutorial sessions assigned to a course do not award additional credits.

University of Chicago Credit

TTIC and University of Chicago maintain similar course credit measurement and observe similar course contact hours, making courses offerings and credits easily shared. The University Registrar maintains the University's credit definition.

External Course Credit

Faculty may recommend or students may request credit for courses from outside programs, and there is a separate process for review and approval of external courses. See External Course Credit Policy ([Intranet](#) 'Student Policy')

Credit Award Approval

The faculty Curriculum Review process (part of the institute's larger program assessment practices) includes approving the number of credits for all courses including those utilizing alternative delivery methods or learning outcomes. The assignment of credit hours should reflect the overall educational content of the course and the academically engaged time required to achieve the desired learning outcome or product for the typical student. Academically engaged time may be measured by the type, quantity, and required level of mastery of the course content.

- Lecture: Three contact hours per week on average (three 50-minute sessions per week or two 80-minute sessions) over a 10-week term. Students are generally expected to spend at least two hours outside of class preparing for each hour in class.
- Independent Research or Reading: One contact hour per week. Instruction, assigned group discussion, and preparation of papers or presentations is considered contact time. Students are generally expected to spend at least 10-12 hours outside of contact time weekly to progress in work.

Credits and Tuition

At most institutions of higher education, credits are a convenient numerical way to assess tuition and fees, with tuition charges calculated by the instructional cost per credit hour. TTIC offers full scholarships that cover tuition, and credits and credit hours do not apply in this way.

Modalities

Instruction may be performed via different modalities, but should maintain that at least 50% of the contact hours be conducted in-person. In cases of advisor sabbatical or other circumstances which require an advisor or instructor to be away, a secondary or local advisor may be assigned to perform contact hour interactions.

F-1 and J-1 student visa holders may have additional modality requirements that they need to abide by to maintain visa compliance. Instructors, advisors and student visa holders are encouraged to coordinate with the institute International Affairs office.

Courses awarding standard 100 credits:

MWF Example:

Instruction/contact hour: (50 minutes x 3 days/week x 9 weeks) = 1500 minutes/qtr	22.5 hours
Required readings and class preparation (1.5hr/class x 3 days/week x 9 weeks)	40.5 hours
Assignments and projects (6 hrs/week x 9 weeks)	54 hours
Tests - preparation	15 hours
Final exam/ Final project period (week 10)	2-10 hours
<i>Total</i>	22.5 hrs of instruction + 111.5-119.5 hrs of work outside class

T,R Example:

Instruction/contact hour: (80 minutes/class x 2 days/week x 9 weeks) = 1440 minutes/qtr	24 hours
Required readings and class preparation (2 hr/class x 2 days/week x 9 weeks)	36 hours
Assignments and projects (6/week x 9 weeks)	54 hours
Tests - preparation	15 hours
Final exam/ Final project period (week 10)	2-10 hours
<i>Total</i>	24 hrs of instruction + 107-115 hrs of work outside class

Courses with a different formula than that above may be awarded more or less credit as determined in the Curriculum Review process, or by faculty vote.

This policy is in compliance with TTIC's accrediting authority, the Higher Learning Commission and its Federal Compliance Requirements.