

Credit Hour Policy
Approved by the Academic Affairs Committee on February 1, 2017
Approved by the faculty on February 15, 2017

Academic credit at Union Theological Seminary is determined and assigned on the basis of semester credit hours, commonly known as “credits” or “credit hours.” Union’s accrediting bodies, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and the Association of Theological Schools, require schools to have a credit hour policy. At Union, this policy is used to measure the academic efforts students will invest in particular courses, and it is one way the seminary monitors the relative efforts students expend in the pursuit of a specific degree.

The U.S. Department of Education defines “credit hour” as: “...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 a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, 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.” (34 CFR 600.2)

The majority of Union courses are awarded three credit hours. Over an entire semester (15 weeks) this represents approximately 45 hours of class time and 90 hours of student preparation time, including assignments. Union recognizes that the time students spend on reading and writing varies greatly. The Associate Dean of Student Affairs’ office can assist students who require additional support to meet their academic requirements.

Minimum credit hours required by degree:

- The MA degree requires at least 51 credits (two years of full-time study).
- The MDiv degree requires at least 78 credits (three years of full-time study).
- The STM requires at least 24 credits (one year of full-time study).
- The DMin degree requires at least 42 credits over three years.