

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO/MEDICAL SCIENCES CAMPUS  
**CREDIT HOUR POLICY**

**Approved in CIPE Meeting March 18, 2015; As Amended August 5, 2016**

**UPDATED: FEBRUARY 2, 2020**

In the University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus, the credit is the basic unit for academic accountability of learning experiences of students (unit of instruction).

A “**CREDIT HOUR**” is the unit of measuring educational **CREDIT**, usually based on the number of classroom **hours** per week throughout a term. Students are awarded **credit** for classes based on the Carnegie unit. This defines a semester unit of **credit** as equal to a minimum of three **hours** of work per week for a semester.

It can be expressed in semester credits or trimester credits. In the Medical Sciences Campus, the semester has duration of 18 weeks, while the trimester is 12 weeks. The Medical Sciences Campus uses semester or trimester credit hours as the unit of instruction in the following schools: Faculty of Biosocial Sciences and Graduate School of Public Health, School of Pharmacy, School of Nursing, School of Dental Medicine (only in residency programs), School of Medicine (only in Biomedical Sciences Graduate Programs) & School of Health Professions.

The first professional degree programs at the School of Medicine (MD) & Dental Medicine (DMD), and the Dietetic Internship Post-baccalaureate Certificate Program (School of Health Professions) use the total hours per calendar year as the unit of instruction for granting credit for work done towards a degree. For the MD Program of the School of Medicine, contact hour includes self-directed learning time due to accreditation requirements.

The credit/hour equivalencies for instructional strategies of academic programs are as follows:

1. Lecture, discussion & seminar – one credit is equivalent to one hour (1:1) weekly during a semester of 18 weeks or a trimester of 12 weeks.
2. Laboratory – one credit is equivalent to 2-3 hours (1:2, 1:3) weekly during a semester of 18 weeks or a trimester of 12 weeks.
3. Undergraduate clinical instruction or clinical practice – one credit is equivalent to 3-7 hours (1:3 to 1:7) weekly during a semester of 18 weeks or a trimester of 12 weeks.
4. Graduate clinical instruction or clinical practice – one credit is equivalent to 2-8 hours (1:2 to 1:8) weekly during a semester of 18 weeks or a trimester of 12 weeks.
5. Professional doctorates practice or clinical instruction (other than MD & DMD) & Advanced Practice clinical instruction - one credit is equivalent to 3-48 hrs. (1:3 to 1:48) weekly during a semester of 18 weeks or a trimester of 12 weeks.
6. Independent study, supervised research and thesis – one credit is equivalent to 2- 30 hours (1:2, 1:3 to 1:30 in Biomedical Sciences Graduate Programs) weekly during a semester of 18 weeks or a trimester of 12 weeks.
7. Out of classroom time for a course should be a minimum of two hours for each hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction, as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. Required out of classroom times may be above the stated minimum depending on the nature of the course and accrediting agencies requirements.