Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits

An accredited institution conforms to a commonly accepted minimum program length of 60 semester credit hours or 90 quarter credit hours awarded for achievement of student learning for an associate degree and 120 semester credit hours or 180 quarter credit hours for a bachelor’s degree. Any exception to this minimum must be explained and justified.

An accredited institution must have in place written policies and procedures for determining a credit hour that generally meet commonly accepted academic expectations and it must apply the policies and procedures consistently to its courses and programs.

At the time of a comprehensive review, the Commission will review the institution’s policies and procedures for determining credit hours for its courses and programs and how these policies and procedures are applied. The Commission will as part of this review assess whether the institution implements the clock-to-credit-hour conversion formula. The Commission will make a reasonable determination of whether the institution’s assignment of credit hour conforms to commonly accepted practice in higher education using sampling and other methods. If, following the review, the Commission finds systematic non-compliance with this policy or significant non-compliance regarding one or more programs at the institution, it must take appropriate action and promptly notify the U.S. Secretary of Education.

Los Angeles Pierce College adheres to the 60 semester unit requirements set forth in Title 5, Section 55063 of the California Code Regulations (CP.1) and in the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) Board Rule 6201.10 (CP.2). This requirement is also included in the Pierce College 2014-2016 General Catalog (CP.3). All degrees consist of units required for the major or area of emphasis, general education, and degree-applicable elective units to reach the 60 unit minimum requirement.

The College awards credits based on commonly accepted practices in higher education and consistent with Title 5, Section 55002.5 (CP.4) and LACCD Administrative Regulation E-113 (CP.5). One credit hour of instruction requires a minimum of 48 hours of study, including: lecture, out-of-class work, or laboratory work. At Pierce College, one credit hour is 54 hours of study. For example, one credit hour equates to one hour of direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work per week based on an 18-week semester. This time is then adjusted to extend scheduled class time for the 16-week semester. The College does not award credit based on the clock-to-credit hour conversion formula.

Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits Evidence List

CP.1 Title 5, Section 55063 of CCR – pshare ID 211
CP.2 LACCD Board Rule 6201.10 – pshare ID 212
CP.3 Catalog pp. 61-63 Degree Requirements – pshare ID 213
CP.4 Title 5, Section 55002.5 of CCR – pshare ID 210
CP.5 LACCD Administrative Regulation E-113 – pshare ID 291