

General Academic Information

Definition of a Credit Hour

In accord with federal regulations, 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 one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester; At least an equivalent amount of work as outlined in item 1 above 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.

Credit or credit hour

A unit of measure representing the equivalent of an hour (50 minutes) of instruction per week over the entire term. It is applied toward the total number of credit hours needed for completing the requirements for a degree, diploma or certificate, or another award.)

Curriculum Review

The Curriculum Committees and Deans of each School or College are charged with following the policy on credit hours in their review and approval of all courses and for certifying that the expected student learning for the course meets the credit hour standard. The determination of credit hours is made when a new course or a revision to an existing course is proposed. The submitted syllabus is examined for contact time as well as for assignments and evaluation mechanisms.

Examinations

The number of examinations administered in a course varies according to the method of instruction. Where midterm examinations are scheduled, they are given near the middle of each course. Final examinations are held at the end of each semester and are a required part of each course in most schools and colleges. For additional information and exceptions to the above, students should consult the individual schools and colleges.

Classification of Students

The number of credits which each student has accumulated determines that student's classification. Students who have received a score of three or higher on any of the Advanced Placement Examinations of the College Board will be eligible, in the area of each examination, for advanced placement and credit toward graduation as determined by the appropriate department. They will also qualify for exemption from certain general education courses as specified by the dean on the basis of the student's total record. Students may not receive credit toward graduation for Howard University courses that are equivalent to courses for which they have received advanced placement credit. All other advanced standing is determined by the individual schools and colleges within Howard University.

Major

A major sequence of study is a series of courses prescribed by a given department as necessary for a concentration in that department. A major ordinarily includes 30 to 39 credits earned in a single department or in closely related departments.

Minor

A minor sequence of study is a combination of courses intended to broaden students' perspectives and buttress their major areas of concentration. A minor generally consists of 15 to 18 credits earned in one or more areas outside of the student's major department.

Elective

An elective is a course which students may choose to take for credit toward earning their degrees.

Grading System

Except where indicated otherwise in school/college bulletins, the following grading system is used at Howard University: A—excellent scholarship, 90 and above; B—good, 80 to 89; C—fair, 70 to 79; D—poor, 60 to 69; F—failure, below 60; W—withdrawal, has no grade value and is, therefore, not calculated in the term of cumulative grade point average; I—incomplete. A grade of D cannot be raised to a higher grade by re-examination. Required courses in which students receive failing grades must be repeated.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

The grade point average is determined by multiplying the number of credit hours of the course by the point value of the grade received for the course (A, 4; B, 3; C, 2; D, 1; F, 0; W not calculated). The resulting products (quality points) are then summed and divided by the total number of credit hours. The grade point average is computed for all courses attempted, excluding courses repeated.

Program of Study

Effective Fall 2013, a total of 120 credits are required for the baccalaureate degree*. The typical program includes a major field (21-78 credits), a minor field (12 - 39 credits), a core group of general education studies, and electives. The specific details of the general education requirement vary among the schools.

* Specialized programs in studio art and architecture have additional credit hour requirements.

Afro-American Studies Requirement

All undergraduate students are required to complete at least one course in Afro-American studies. Courses which satisfy this requirement are offered by several departments.

Residency Requirement

The majority of the individual schools and colleges at Howard University require that students spend the last 30 credit hours of undergraduate study in residence at the University in the school or college in which the degree is awarded.

GPA Requirement for Graduation

To receive a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree, students must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale. Additional grade requirements are determined by degreegranting School or College.

Honors

Students will be graduated with honors under the following conditions: those with a cumulative grade point average (GPA) ranging from 3.20 through 3.49 will be graduated cum laude; those with a cumulative GPA ranging from 3.50 through 3.79 will be graduated magna cum laude, and those with a cumulative GPA of 3.80 or higher will be graduated summa cum laude.

Grades in noncredit courses are not considered in determining eligibility for honors. Although the policy varies according to the individual schools and colleges within the University, generally students are not eligible to receive these distinctions at graduation if they have not completed the last half of the work required for their degree in residence at Howard; if they have repeated courses to raise their GPA; or if they have not carried at least 12 credits for each semester enrolled, with the exception of the last semester in residence.

Students who have excelled academically are honored by having their names placed on the Dean's Honor Roll. Generally, this honor roll is published annually and includes honor students from the preceding school year. The GPA required differs among the schools and colleges according to their specific policies.

Time Limitation

There is no strict regulation with respect to the total amount of time in which undergraduate students must fulfill their degree requirements, provided they maintain an appropriate grade point average and give evidence of being seriously interested in the eventual achievement of their academic objectives.

Attendance

All students are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly. Students who are absent from classes are held responsible, nevertheless, for the entire work of the course. Members of the faculty will hold students responsible for regular and prompt class attendance. Any student who does not take a scheduled midterm or final examination must obtain the approval of his instructor in order to take a 69 substitute examination. A student who does not secure such approval will receive a grade of zero for the examination missed.