

COURSE DEFINITIONS

Course Numbers

- Courses numbered (MDE 10, MDE 60, EDE 10, and ESL) are developmental studies courses. The credits earned in these courses are not used in computing grade point average and do not apply toward graduation or transfer. However, such courses carry credit for the purpose of tuition payment.
- Courses numbered 10-99 are basic occupational courses for diploma and certificate programs. The credits earned in these courses are applicable toward diploma and certificate programs but are not applicable toward an associate degree.
- Courses numbered 100-199 are freshman courses applicable toward an associate degree and/or certificate and diploma programs.
- Courses numbered 200-299 are sophomore courses applicable toward an associate degree and/or certificate and diploma programs.
- Courses numbered MDE 54, MDE 61, EDE 11, and ESL are co-requisite courses. The credits earned in these courses are not used in computing grade point average and do not apply toward graduation or transfer. However, such courses carry credit for the purposes of tuition payment.

Course Prerequisites and Co-requisites

If any prerequisites are required to enroll in a course, these prerequisites will be identified in the course description in the College Catalog. The Catalog also indicates which courses must be taken in sequence (i.e. CHM 111-CHM 112). When co-requisites are required for a course, usually the co-requisites must be taken at the same time. The prerequisites or their equivalent must be completed satisfactorily before enrolling in a course unless special permission is obtained from the instructor.

Students must ensure that any required prerequisite (including placement test results) is documented in their student record prior to registration. The College reserves the right to administratively withdraw students from courses for which they have not met the prerequisites.

Course Hours

The educational programs combine the teaching of theoretical concepts in “lecture” with an appropriate amount of application of principles and practical training in “laboratory” under faculty supervision. The teaching of theoretical concepts in lectures, seminars, discussions, and other similar classes is identified as “lecture” and the teaching of the application of principles and practical training in laboratories, seminars, shop, clinical training, supervised work experiences, and other similar classes is identified as “laboratory.”

The number of lecture hours in class each week (including lecture, seminar, and discussion hours) and/or the number of laboratory hours in class each week (including laboratory, shop, supervised practice, and cooperative work experiences) are indicated for each course in the course description. The total number of lecture and laboratory hours in class each week is also called “contact” hours because it is time spent under the direct supervision of a faculty member. In addition to attending the required lecture and laboratory hours as listed in the course descriptions, students also must spend time on out-of-class assignments. Each credit hour usually requires two hours of out-of-class study per week. Credits are indicated in the course description section.

Credit Hour

A credit hour¹ is defined as the objectives and amount of work a student could reasonably accomplish in three hours of academically engaged time per week in a 15-week semester, verified by achievement of intended student outcomes. In a seated lecture class, each credit hour would represent one 50-minute “hour” of formal instruction² and approximately two hours of independent student work per week over a 15-week semester, and a final examination. Distance learning or hybrid courses may not include the same amount of synchronous instruction, but will include equivalent objectives and intended student outcomes.

One laboratory credit hour can be the equivalent of two to five contact hours, depending on the discipline (An expanded definition is included in the Virginia Community College System Policy Manual 5.3.0.1 – 5.3.0.2)

¹ Credit Hour: Also referred to as a Carnegie Unit.

² Contact Hour: One 50-minute “hour” of formal instruction.

Course Offerings

All courses are not offered each semester and some are offered only every other year. Students are advised to refer to the current Schedule of Classes, as well as consult with an academic advisor for assistance with planning ahead.