A credit hour is defined by Columbia College Hollywood and the U.S. Department of Education 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 one (1) hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two (2) hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately thirteen to fifteen weeks for one hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, or at least an equivalent amount of work for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practicum, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours. Senior Thesis and production-based courses may exceed the minimum expectation for out-of-classroom work.

A typical 4-quarter-credit-hour course meets for one 4-hour/240-minute class period each week for 11 weeks for a total of 44 contact hours/2640 contact minutes over the term. Each course also requires 8 hours/480 minutes of out-of-class student work per week for a total of 88 hours/5280 minutes of out of class student work over the term. Total contact and out-of-class hours per term is 132 hours or 7,920 minutes.

A typical three (3) semester credit hour course meets for two (2) 75-minute class periods each week or one (1) 3-hour/180-minute class period each week for 15 weeks for a total of 37.5 contact hours/2220 contact minutes over the term, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time. Each course also requires 6 hours/360 minutes of out-of-class student work per week for a total of 90 hours/5400 minutes of out-of-class student work over a 15-week term. Total contact and out-of-class hours for each course per term is 127.5 hours or 7,650 minutes excluding time for final exams.