

## **ABA Standard 310 Compliance Policy for Regent University School of Law**

In 2014, the American Bar Association (ABA) adopted the federal definition of a credit hour, as required by the U.S. Department of Education. As a University accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Regent University also has adopted this standard university-wide. Based on the federal and SACSCOC standard, a credit hour represents a total of 45 hours of course work for each credit hour (3 hours/credit x 15 weeks). In a traditional classroom course, this assumption is based upon a projection of 1 hour of in-class instruction or other faculty contact and 2 hours of other course-related student work each week. Course-related work outside the classroom can include time in the classroom or other direct student-faculty contact, class preparation time, time invested into completion of assignments, and study time, but does not include time invested into taking a final exam.

The ABA views a 50-minute class as satisfying the weekly hour contemplated, effectively reducing the expected time investment per semester to 42.5 hours. However, the ABA notes that “seat time” is not the sole focus on ABA Standard 310 and the standard does not dictate specific amounts of in-class instruction or outside student work. Rather, it requires that each course require a minimum of an “equivalent” of 42.5 hours of student investment per credit hour. Presently, each law school is required to adopt a policy articulating how it will assure that each course supplies at least the required minimum level of “equivalent” work.

In compliance with ABA Standard 310, SACSCOC, and Regent University’s credit hour policy, the School of Law will assure that each J.D. course requires the equivalent of at least 45 hours of student work for each credit hour. For each class, the professor will consider in this determination projected in-class time, and anticipated time investment for class preparation, assigned papers and projects, and exam studying. Field placements, clinical courses, and other courses involving considerable non-class time will also require the equivalent of at least 45 hours of student work for each credit hour.

### **Standard 310. DETERMINATION OF CREDIT HOURS FOR COURSEWORK**

(a) A law school shall adopt, publish, and adhere to written policies and procedures for determining the credit hours that it awards for coursework.

(b) A “credit hour” is an amount of work that reasonably approximates: (1) not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and two hours of out-of class student work per week for fifteen weeks, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as required in subparagraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including simulation, field placement, clinical, co-curricular, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Interpretation 310-1 For purposes of this Standard, fifty minutes suffices for one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction. An “hour” for out-of-class student work is sixty minutes. The fifteen-week period may include one week for a final examination.

Interpretation 310-2 A school may award credit hours for coursework that extends over any period of time, if the coursework entails no less than the minimum total amounts of classroom or direct faculty instruction and of out-of-class student work specified in Standard 310(b).