

The Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 1965 – most recently modified and reauthorized by Congress in 2008 – sets forth, among other things, the campus compliance requirements for eligibility to participate in Federal Title IV student aid programs. New to the rules for the implementation of HEOA is a definitional detail pertaining to minimum standards for an academic credit hour.

In effect, these rules codify the status quo that one credit hour is awarded for one hour of class time per week. The rules, however, take the definition one step further in requiring campuses to state the students' out-of-class work expectations at a minimum of two hours for every one hour of instruction.

This past academic year, all IU campuses adopted credit hour definition policies that are consistent with this requirement. Though all IU campuses have become compliant with the federal definition, the definition contained within the *Academic Handbook* (August, 2008, printing, page 47) has not yet been updated to address the out-of-class expectations, or a stated accommodation for equivalent work through other academic activities.

During a discussion of the Academic Leadership Council (ALC) on this topic last Spring, the ALC recommended that the University Faculty Council consider a revised definition for the Handbook, such as:

The usual 3-credit lecture class shall meet for a minimum of approximately 2,000 minutes, excluding the final examination period. Specific campus policies pertaining to credit hour definition shall also comply with all regulatory requirements.

A vote on the inclusion of this language in the Handbook is what is being requested of the University Faculty Council at this time.