



## Minerva University Credit Unit Policy

Minerva University exceeds the Western Senior Colleges and Universities Commission (WASC) credit unit policy in terms of total minutes for combined in-class time and out-of-class work. Minerva requires more out-of-class work relative to in-class time because of the flipped classroom model used in all courses. Students are required to do extensive pre-class preparation and obtain their initial “information capture” on their own using the provided structured readings and/or videos, study guides, and pre-class work. Students are held accountable at the beginning of every class with poll questions and uploading of a section of their pre-class work. Faculty build upon students’ pre-class work in the active-learning synchronous classroom. Students must come to class prepared for the active learning seminar-style class sessions to be pedagogically sound; they receive formative assessments on their in-class work. Therefore, Minerva students are required to attend all classes and class attendance is automatically monitored by our virtual learning platform. If students have an extenuating circumstance that prevents them from attending class, they must complete make-up work, which includes doing all pre-class work, watching the class recording, and answering all poll questions. Students’ in-class work is reinforced by extensive project-based assignments that students pursue outside of class and that are assessed for summative feedback purposes. Students who do not attend at least 3/4 of the in-class sessions are subject to withdrawal from the course. Most Minerva University courses amount to 4 semester credits. Using the WASC policy, 4 credits would be 9,000 total minutes (one credit is 15 hours in class and 30 hours out of class; this equals 45, 50-minute in-class hours, which is 2,250 minutes/credit). The policy requirements for in-class and out-of-class work for each category of Minerva’s course offering are below. The requisite time is provided in minutes, as Minerva’s classes are not 50 minutes in duration.

**Cornerstone First-Year Courses (4 credits):** Cornerstone classes meet two times per week for 90 minutes each, for 13 weeks (there is one half-week break and one full-week break during the semester and no class meeting in week 15 when students are completing their Final Projects). In-class time totals 2,250 minutes for the semester. Students spend at least 8,400 minutes outside of class as follows:

- 1) Preparing for class amounts to 540 minutes/week (180 minutes per hour of class time), resulting in 7,020 minutes over 13 weeks.
- 2) Every course has a Location-Based Assignment (LBA) for which students must complete a project that involves applying specific course content within the city where



they are living and delivering a written paper on this work. The requirement (not including time for internet research and the write-up) is a minimum of 180 minutes per LBA.

- 3) Project-based assignments are designed to require a minimum of 1,200 minutes to complete. Altogether the in-class (2,250 minutes) and out-of-class work (8,400 minutes) for each of the four courses each semester is 10,740 minutes.
- 4) In addition, there is a single Final Project for each semester in which students are required to apply multiple Learning Outcomes (LOs) introduced in each of their four courses that semester to a real-world problem they are tackling with a Civic Partner. The Final Project, their Cornerstone Civic Project requires a minimum of 2,700 minutes total out-of-class time work spread over each semester, resulting in an additional 0.5 credits per semester. The Class of 2027 and onwards will also take a 0.5 credit course on academic and career exploration in which students attend workshops amounting to 1,350 minutes per semester.

**Major Core and Concentration Courses (4 credits):** Classes meet two times per week for 90 minutes each, for 13 weeks (there is one half-week and one full-week break during the semester and no class meeting in week 15 when students are completing their Final Projects. In-class time totals 2,250 minutes for the semester. Students spend at least 10,200 minutes outside of class as follows:

- 1) Preparing for class amounts to 540 minutes/week (180 minutes per hour of class time), 7,020 minutes over 13 weeks.
- 2) Every course has a Location-Based Assignment (LBA) in which students must complete a project that involves applying course content within the city where they are living. The requirement (not including time for internet research and the write-up) is a minimum of 180 minutes per LBA.
- 3) Project-based assignments must be designed to require a minimum of 3,000 minutes to complete. The total requirement is 12,540 minutes (2,250 minutes in class and 10,200 minutes out of class).

**Additional Credit Bearing courses (0.5 - 2 credit hours):** Second-year students take a 0.5 credit course on academic and career exploration in which students attend workshops amounting to 1,350 minutes per semester. All students take a 0.5 credit global learning course each semester in which they participate in events and activities in their rotation city totaling 1,350 minutes per semester. Minerva also offers 2-credit special topic courses in which students attend a weekly 90-minute class and complete a research paper, totaling 5,400 minutes.



**Senior Tutorials (4 credits):** These are small class sessions (6-10 students) facilitated by the faculty instructor and designed and led by students.

- 1) Sessions are structured as graduate-level seminar classes during which students dig deeply into the chosen focus topic. Class time is a minimum of 13 sessions at 90 minutes each, plus students are required to meet together each week for another 90 minutes to prepare for class through discussion of the structured study guide and pre-class work (2,340 minutes).
- 2) Students participating in each class are required to prepare even more than the standard 4-credit course, requiring 210 minutes each week for 13 weeks (2,730 minutes).
- 3) Each student is required to design and teach at least one class session. Depending on the number of students in the tutorial, a student will also design and teach a second class session alone or with another student. This work requires a minimum of 15 hours or 900 minutes/per class session designed and taught, or 1,800 minutes for two class sessions.
- 4) Multiple assignments are required that necessitate an additional 3,900 minutes. The total requirement is 10,270 minutes (2,340 minutes in class and 7,930 minutes out of class).

**Capstone Seminar (2 credits):** Students take a Capstone seminar for two semesters during their third year, each amounting to 2 credits. The goal is to provide students with the skills and tools they need to develop a strong proposal for their Capstone Project by the end of their third year. Students attend class sessions once a week for 9 weeks with other students and their instructor, with occasional interspersed independent study weeks when major deliverables are required and more time is required to complete them. There is substantial pre-class work and deliverables for each class session, plus multiple major assignments.

- 1) Total in-class time is 810 minutes per semester.
- 2) Preparation time is 180 minutes per class session or 2,430 minutes total.
- 3) There are 7 assignments, which take a minimum of 2,400 minutes to complete.

The total requirement is 5,650 minutes (810 minutes in class and 4,830 minutes out of class).

**Capstone Directed Study (4 credits):** Students spend the two semesters of their fourth year developing their Capstone projects. Students meet multiple times in class sessions as a class with their advisor, during which peer and instructor feedback occurs on intermediate products that are submitted on the way to producing the final major deliverable, their Capstone Project.



- 1) Each semester, a minimum of three group meetings are required with the instructor and students present (each semester, 270 minutes total for in-class presence and 2,160 minutes total for meeting preparation).
- 2) In addition, there are two committee meetings in the Fall and one defense meeting in the Spring with the main advisor and second advisor/reader during which students present their progress (each semester 60 minutes total for presentation and 1,440 minutes total for preparation).
- 3) There are three assignments in the Fall and two assignments in the Spring (each semester requiring 6,870 minutes total).

The total requirement is 12 hours per week for each semester totaling 10,800 minutes; 330 minutes in class and 10,470 minutes out of class).

**Manifest (2 credits):** Students attend mandatory workshops, symposiums, and classes, plus they prepare and teach a class on their Capstone during the three weeks of the Manifest course.

Week 1 consists of multiple workshops and training sessions to assist students in preparing to design and execute on teaching their active learning class on their Capstone Project and to provide meaningful peer feedback to other students. In addition, there are workshops on networking and preparing for post-graduation. Altogether, workshop preparation (360 minutes) and attendance (540 minutes) time is 900 minutes. Students turn in their lesson plan design, a prospectus summarizing their Capstone, and a video presentation.

In week 2, every student teaches an active learning class based on their Capstone Project, demonstrating their application of Habits of Mind and Foundational Concepts (HCs) and providing opportunities for students in attendance to apply HCs. Every student teaches a one-hour-long class and must attend eleven other class sessions taught by their peers, totaling 720 minutes. They are also required to provide feedback to each of the students leading the classes they attend, and to the participants in the class that they teach. Preparation for the eleven class sessions that students attend is 60 minutes/class, totaling 660 minutes. Designing and leading their own class sessions is estimated at 1,000 minutes for their active learning class. It is estimated that providing peer feedback will collectively take 480 minutes. The total for week 2 is 2,860 minutes.

Students are required to contribute to multiple events during week 3 which includes a three-day conference with faculty and external experts from many fields during which students



will participate in discussions on a range of critically important issues (1,080 minutes) and focus group/reflection/feedback sessions (560 minutes).

The total requirement for Manifest is 5,400 minutes.

**Internships/Research/Practicum (2 or 4 credits):** 4 credits require 240 hours or 14,400 minutes of actual intern work/research experience, which is verified by the student's supervisor, and supplemented with a paper summarizing the experience and application of HCs, requiring another 120 minutes of work. 2 credits require 120 hours or 7,200 minutes of actual intern work/research experience verified by the supervisor, and the paper requires 120 minutes. The total minutes for 4 credits and 2 credits are 14,520 minutes and 7,320 minutes, respectively.

**Masters in Decision Analysis Program (4 credits):** 7 of 8 course requirements for the Masters in Decision Analysis (MDA) have the same structure and credit unit policy as the Major Core and Concentration courses taught in the undergraduate program, detailed above. The total requirement per course is 12,540 minutes (2,160 minutes in class and 10,380 minutes out of class). One course requirement, SS360, includes fewer meetings (1,170 minutes) and more time working on group projects outside of class (11,370 minutes).

**Masters in Decision Analysis Thesis (4 credits):** MDA students spend the final semester working exclusively on their master's thesis. Discussions with potential advisors and the development of the initial concept for the thesis, which typically begins in the penultimate semester, require approximately 25 hours (1,500 minutes). Once underway, students are expected to meet once per week with their advisor for one hour each meeting totaling 840 minutes. Students also attend 10 thesis progress workshops (900 minutes). Development of the work products discussed in these meetings constitutes the bulk of the work, with an expectation of at least 10 hours per week, totaling 8,400 minutes. Preparation and delivery of the final oral defense requires approximately 10 hours (600 minutes). The total workload for the MDA thesis is 12,240 minutes.