

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF MUSIC

**HANDBOOK 2013–14**

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The information contained in this edition of the *NASM Handbook* includes revisions approved at the November 2013 Annual Meeting, and those approved during a special vote-by-email procedure conducted in April 2014.

Readers are encouraged to consult the [NASM Web site](#) for the latest information concerning policies, procedures, and proposed and/or approved standards revisions.

Institutions undergoing review for accreditation or reaccreditation should refer to the NASM Web site for the most recent guidance and procedures for 1) self-study and 2) preparations for an on-site review. Information and all applicable forms and procedures documents can be found under [Procedures for Accreditation Applications](#) within the section of the Web site titled

### **Accreditation Procedures.**

**NATIONAL OFFICE:**

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF MUSIC**

**11250 Roger Bacon Drive, Suite 21**

**Reston, Virginia 20190-5248**

Telephone:

**(703) 437-0700**

Facsimile:

**(703) 437-6312**

E-mail:

[info@arts-accredit.org](mailto:info@arts-accredit.org)

Web Site:

<http://nasm.arts-accredit.org>

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The *NASM Handbook* may be downloaded as a PDF document from the [Standards/Handbook](#) section of the [Web site](#) at no charge.

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## III.A.

### A. Credit and Time Requirements *(always applicable in postsecondary institutions)*

#### 1. Program Lengths

- a. Associate degrees require a minimum of 60 semester or 90 quarter credit hours and the equivalent of two academic years.
- b. Baccalaureate degrees require a minimum of 120 semester or 180 quarter hours and the equivalent of four academic years.
- c. Post-baccalaureate degrees require a minimum of 30 semester or 45 quarter hours and the equivalent of one academic year and must meet additional credit and time requirements according to degree level and title.
- d. Postsecondary professionally-oriented non-degree-granting programs in degree-granting institutions have semester, quarter, clock hour, and/or other time requirements commensurate with the subject matter and purposes of specific programs.
- e. The total time requirement for any postsecondary program must be commensurate with the number of credit or clock hours required to complete the program. Reasonable total time requirements must be formulated and published.
- f. Community or precollegiate programs have time requirements commensurate with the subject matter and purposes of specific programs. Except for this item, the standards in Section III.A. do not apply to these programs.

#### 2. Awarding Credit

- a. Credit shall be awarded consistently according to the published credit policies of the institution and in compliance with NASM standards. Institutional policies shall establish the credit hour in terms of time and achievement required. The minimum time requirement shall be consistent with or reasonably approximate the following: (1) a semester hour of credit represents at least three hours of work each week, on average, for a period of fifteen to sixteen weeks, (2) a quarter hour of credit represents at least three hours of work each week for a period of ten or eleven weeks. Credit for other kinds of academic requirements or offerings that are in different formats, use different modes of delivery, or that are structured to take a different amount of time is computed on the same basis in terms of representing at least the equivalent amount of work. Policies concerning achievement shall be consistent with the principle that credit is earned only when curricular, competency, and all other requirements are met and the final examination or equivalent is satisfactorily passed.

**NOTE:** The above standard does not (i) require that a credit hour definition at any institution for any course or purpose duplicate exactly the definition provided in items a. (1) and (2), or that all programs or courses within a single institution follow the same credit hour policies; (ii) restrict an institution from requiring more student work per credit hour than indicated in items a. (1) and (2); (iii) dictate the ratio of in-class versus out-of-class work; or (iv) prevent an institution from establishing means and methods for equating the direct assessment of student learning to the awarding of one or more credit hours.

- b. In lecture-discussion courses, normally one hour of credit is given for one period of recitation (50 minutes) plus two hours of preparation each week of the term. In laboratory courses, normally one hour of credit is given for two to three 50-minute recitation periods per week. Institutions vary significantly in ways credit is granted for ensembles. Some regard ensembles as laboratory courses, either implicitly or explicitly; others grant credit based on factors such as, but not limited to the nature and size of the ensemble; whether the ensemble is coached or conducted; the amount of student preparation required; and relationships to other credit requirements in the total curricular program.

- c. It is recommended that one credit hour be given for each three hours per week of practice, plus the necessary individual instruction, with a maximum of six credits per term allowed for the major subject in music performance.